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**LECTURES**  
ON THE  
**SACRED**  
**POETRY OF THE HEBREWS**

By **ROBERT LOWTH, D. D.**

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN BY G. GREGORY, F. A. S.

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A NEW EDITION WITH NOTES

BY

**CALVIN E. STOWE, A. M.**

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*Opus erim de Sacra Poesi absolutissimum, nemo est, opinor, in his studiis versatus, qui non perlegerit; nemo, cui non summam admirationem attulerit cum argumenti dignitas, et eruditi auctoris singulare iudicium, tum Latini sermonis venustas ac nitor.* *Sir William Jones.*

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**JOHN W. DAVIS,** { *Clerk of the District  
of Massachusetts.*

## PREFACE.

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AT different periods in the history of mankind, Providence raises up men who are destined to effect a complete revolution in the intellectual character of their age, and to exert an influence which will not cease while time endures. These are the leaders of the human race in the career of improvement, an office for which they are fitted only by unyielding independence and hardihood of understanding, the result of a peculiarly happy mental structure cooperating with peculiar circumstances; and they deserve, more than any others, the title of *vicegerents of God on earth*, for under Him and by His appointment they rule the world of mind.

Of this number was ROBERT LOWTH, a name which will ever be held in veneration by the student of Sacred Literature. His father, the REV. WILLIAM LOWTH, who was Chaplain to the Bishop of Winchester and Prebendary of a Cathedral Church in that See, is known as the author of commentaries on several books of the Old Testament, which rank among the best of their time; and to the favourite pursuits of the father we are perhaps indebted for the labours and celebrity of the son. ROBERT was born at Winchester in the year 1710, and received the first rudiments of his education at the school founded in that city by WILLIAM OF WYKEHAM. He there distinguished himself, at a very early age, as a classical and Hebrew scholar, and a poet. In 1728 he was sent to New College, Oxford; of which he was elected Fellow in 1734; took the degree of M. A. in 1737; and in 1741 succeeded JOSEPH SPENCE as Professor of Poetry in that University. It was in discharge of the duties of this office that he delivered his justly celebrated Lectures entitled: *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum Praelectiones Academicæ*; of which the first

edition was published in 1753, about a year after the expiration of the term of his Professorship, and a second in 1763.

Though **LOWTH**, when he accepted his Professorship, had but just completed the thirtieth year of his age, and had never before appeared in a public character, he immediately formed a design which would have done honour to mature age and long experience. This was no other than to reclaim from the dust of ages and the rubbish of allegorizing mystics, the relics of primeval poetry preserved in the Sacred Writings of the Hebrews, to set them in their true light, and prove them worthy the attention and favour of men of taste. It was his purpose to discover the true spirit and meaning of the genuine oracles of God, and to disjoin them from the rude and tasteless additions of uninspired interpreters. **CALVIN** and **GROTIUS** had already given noble examples of acute and logical exegesis of the Scriptures; **SIMON** and **LE CLERC** had prepared the way for the investigation of their history; **SELDEN** had searched out the numerous hints which they give respecting ancient manners and domestic life; **MILTON** had explored their rich stores of poetic imagery; and many other distinguished scholars, as **VITRINGA**, **BUXTORF**, **BOCHART**, and **LIGHTFOOT**, had laboured successfully in different departments of Sacred Literature: but no one had yet arisen to survey accurately the whole ground, to assign the boundaries of safe investigation, to present the student with a clue that would guide him through the labyrinth of conjecture and mysticism, to collect and arrange the more important results which lay scattered in the writings of others, to look on the Hebrew Scriptures with the eye of a critic and the heart of a poet, and to give to Sacred Interpretation the form and dignity of a science. Notwithstanding all that had been done, but few general and correct principles of exegesis had as yet been settled, the Bible had never been viewed in its true light as a work of taste, the unnatural and barren expositions of the Rabbins were still deemed authoritative; and Christian interpreters were wandering in the dark wilds of mysticism, or exhausting their strength and wasting their time in the useless search of etymologies and various readings. No one, indeed, had ever ventured to express the opinion that the prophets wrote in poetry, excepting the ec-



centric HERMANN VAN DER HARDT, who threw out this among the other fancies of his prolific brain, (and the idea then lost all reputation by appearing in such company); and the learned VITRINGA, who had given a hint to that effect in his Commentary on ISAIAH.

Under these circumstances LOWTH appeared, with the determination and the ability to breathe a new spirit into the whole business of sacred study. He was peculiarly qualified for a task so delicate and arduous. To an enthusiastic love for the Scriptures he added a remarkable vigour and comprehensiveness of mind, a singular acuteness and accuracy of judgement, a fine poetic taste chastened and corrected by an intimate acquaintance with the Classics of Greece and Rome, which prevented his being misled by the errors of others or blinded by fancies of his own; and he was gifted with a command of language and a felicity of illustration, and withal, a modesty and reserve of manner, which secured the attention and engaged the affections of all who listened to his instructions.

With such talents and such qualifications, success could not long remain doubtful. LOWTH broke through the trammels of false taste and erroneous theology, penetrated to the secret retirements of the Hebrew Muse, discovered and developed the true nature and genuine sources of the Sacred Poetry, marked out the boundaries of its several departments and assigned to each its appropriate characteristics, and led the way to a new and more perfect mode of Scriptural interpretation; and by the exquisite specimens of translation with which he illustrated and enriched his Lectures, he proved that the soaring genius and refined taste of the poet may be united with the severe accuracy of the critic, the gravity of the theologian, and the religious sensibility of the devout Christian. The effect was wonderful. LOWTH was immediately caressed and honoured by all the patrons of learning in his own country, and hailed on the continent of Europe as the former of a new era in the literary world; for it was his work on the Hebrew Poetry which first directed the attention of the studious Germans to a department of literature which they have since pursued with such untiring zeal and astonishing success. In England he has had many admirers, but no successor.

In 1748 **MR. LOWTH** attended the **HON. MR. LEGGE**, afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the Court of Berlin, then the residence of **FREDERIC THE GREAT**; and the next year, took charge of the sons of the Duke of Devonshire, as their travelling tutor on the continent. The manner in which he discharged his duty in this capacity, secured to him the favour and lasting friendship of the Duke. In 1754 he received the degree of **D. D.** from the University of Oxford; and the next year he was nominated first Chaplain to the Marquis of Hartington, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Thither he attended that nobleman, and was soon offered the Bishopric of Limerick, which he exchanged with **DR. LESLIE**, an Irishman, for a Prebend in the Diocess of Durham in his own country. In 1758 he preached at Durham a sermon on **Free Inquiry in Matters of Religion**, which has been much celebrated and often reprinted; and in the subsequent year, he published a **Life of WYKEHAM**, Bishop of Winchester, and founder of the school in which he received his early education. Soon after, he published an **Introduction to English Grammar**, a work which first awakened the attention of Englishmen to the study of their own language, and for a long time remained the text-book of the schools and Universities; a place from which it has recently been excluded to make room for a competitor of very questionable pretensions. In 1765 he was elected a member of the Royal Society of Goettingen, and was soon after involved in a warm controversy with the uneasy and turbulent **WARBURTON**. This haughty prelate for once met with his match; and he was so completely humbled by the cutting sarcasm and overpowering eloquence of **LOWTH**, that he was glad to retire from the field in the (to him) new character of a beaten champion. In 1766 **DR. LOWTH** was made Bishop of St. Davids, and was soon after transferred to the See of Oxford, which he retained till 1777, when he succeeded **DR. TERRICK** in the Bishopric of London. The next year he published his **Translation of ISAIAH**, with a **Preliminary Dissertation and Notes**; a noble work, and in most respects worthy the mature reflections of the author of the **Lectures on Hebrew Poetry**, but disfigured by many verbal criticisms, which can neither be valued, nor scarcely respected,

at the present day. In 1781 he was engaged in a law-suit with **LEWIS DISNEY FFYTCHÉ, Esq.**, concerning the legality of general bonds of resignation, which the courts decided against the Bishop, though that decision was afterwards reversed in the House of Lords by a majority of one vote. In 1783 he was fixed upon to succeed **DR. CORNWALLIS** in the Archbishopric of Canterbury; but his advanced age and increasing infirmities induced him to decline that distinguished honour. In the year 1787, after a most painful illness, in which he suffered from the tortures of the stone, and from a paralysis of the throat, that prevented his taking any nourishment but a little liquid, during the last fourteen days of his life, he died of hunger, in distressing convulsions, on the third day of November, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. During the whole of this dreadful scene of suffering, he exhibited the firmness of a man and the patient resignation of a Christian. He left one son and one daughter, to whom he bequeathed a fortune of £40,000. He had suffered severe afflictions in his family. His eldest son, who gave the most flattering promise of future eminence, was hurried to an untimely grave; his eldest daughter, of whom he was passionately fond, died in 1768, at the age of 14; and in 1783 his second daughter, as she was presiding at the tea-table, suddenly expired before her father's eyes. The following exquisitely beautiful epitaph, which he wrote for the tomb-stone of his first and favourite daughter, does equal honour to his feelings as a parent and his taste as a scholar.

"Care, vale, ingenio præstans, pietate, pudore,

"Et plusquam natæ nomine cara, vale.

"Cara Maria, vale. At veniet felicius ævum

"Quando iterum tecum, sim modo dignus, ero.

"Cara, redi, læta tum dicam voce paternus,

"Eja, age in amplexus, cara Maria, redi."

Of the character of **Bishop Lowth's** mind, an account has already been given; and his writings afford a sufficient exhibition of what he was as an intellectual man. His manners were those of a Christian gentleman; he was naturally of a religious and benevolent disposition; his temperament was warm and rather inclined to melancholy. His feelings were quick and strong; but

he had learned the art of self-government : conscious of his own powers, his decisions were prompt and his conduct determined ; but without arrogance or obstinacy. In all the various offices which he was called to fill, he was scrupulously faithful and conscientious in the discharge of his duty ; and in him were united strength of intellect, depth of erudition, refinement of taste, firmness of character, modesty, gentleness, and piety.

In review of the many excellencies of **DR. LOWTH**, and before I proceed to point out the deficiencies of his works, I feel constrained to present the reader with the concluding paragraph of **FICHHORN**'s critique on his literary merits. " Meanwhile, let no unfriendly spirit henceforth persecute the shade of this noble Briton ; and if we detect deficiencies in his works or find them below the knowledge of our times, let no man forget what he was for his own age ; how beneficial was his influence upon his contemporaries : that we have become what we are, in part at least, by his aid ; and that he has helped us forward many steps by his investigations and masterly example. And now, thou enlightened spirit, raised above all worldly imperfections, thou thyself seest far better than thine earthly brethren, how near thou camest to the goal towards which thou didst aim, and wilt approve the good will of the foreigner unknown to thee in life, who has endeavoured to speak impartially of thy merits. If he has not done them justice, pardon the weakness to which thou art now superior, and smile propitiously on the offering of gratitude which he has presented thee."

The deficiencies of **LOWTH** are principally owing to a want of extensive acquaintance with Oriental literature. He was perfectly familiar with the whole range of classical learning, and wrote the Latin language with the ease and elegance of an orator and poet of the Augustan age ; but the Hebrew he had learned only by means of Lexicographers and a diligent study of the Old Testament, without any knowledge of the kindred dialects, and but imperfectly acquainted with the peculiarities of the Oriental world. Hence, though he always strikes out a magnificent outline, he frequently falters while attempting to supply the details ; and instead of pointing at once to the particular trait in Oriental



character or manners, which would set the full meaning of a passage before our eyes, he is hunting for a various reading by help of which to escape from difficulty, or he is finding fault with the Masorites and changing the text on his own authority. Hence, too, his very excellencies were in some respects a disadvantage; for his familiarity with the Classics led him to labour to conform the writings of the Hebrews too much to their rules, and the eloquence of his Latin style not unfrequently tempted him to conceal real ignorance under the flowing drapery of a well-turned sentence.

Happily for the cause of sacred learning, LOWTH found in Germany an Editor capable of appreciating his merits and admirably qualified to supply his defects. This was the celebrated JOHN DAVID MICHAELIS; who was born at Halle in the year 1717, and after having acquired considerable reputation as a scholar and teacher, was invited by the Hanoverian minister MUENCHHAUSEN to the newly-founded University of Goettingen in 1745, where in 1750 he was made Professor of Philosophy, a post which he retained till his death in 1791. His early education had been rather loose and irregular, and he scarcely knew towards what point to direct his attention; but possessing an inquisitive mind and a disposition of singular vivacity, he made rapid progress in whatever he undertook. His father, CHRISTIAN BENEDICT MICHAELIS, Professor of Theology and the Oriental Languages at Halle, was considerably distinguished as an Orientalist, and had published a Syriac Grammar. Such was his zeal for the progress of his favourite studies, that on his death-bed he charged his son JOHN DAVID to publish an edition of the Syriac Lexicon from CASTELL's Heptaglott, as a companion to his Syriac Grammar; which he had intended to do himself had his life been spared. The son has not informed us what influence this circumstance had on his subsequent studies; but he honestly confesses that he forgot to comply with his father's dying request till after he was seventy years old.

In 1741 the young MICHAELIS made a visit to England; and while at Oxford he was invited by a friend to attend the public exercises of the University, when he chanced to hear LOWTH

read his second Lecture on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews. With the countenance, the manners, and the whole appearance of the Lecturer, he was highly delighted, and earnestly desired to form a personal acquaintance with him, but was unable to obtain an introduction.

The predilections of MICHAELIS were in favour of the study of history ; but when MUENCHHAUSEN called him to Goettingen, he charged him to bend all his efforts to reform the theology of Germany, and give it a higher and more intellectual cast. He engaged in the work with his characteristic zeal and energy ; and the numberless labours of more than half a century bear ample testimony to his iron diligence and unyielding independence, to the acuteness and vivacity of his mind, and the good-humoured sincerity of his heart. As the best means of reforming theology, he exerted all his powers to illustrate the Bible ; he shrunk from no difficulties and spared no pains to obtain an intimate acquaintance with the languages, customs, and history of the Oriental nations ; he started after every hint that would give him the least aid in his investigations, and never gave over his pursuit till he had attained his object. Of his zeal and ability in the pursuit of Oriental literature, the scientific expedition to the East, which was set forward by the king of Denmark at his request and under his direction, and which resulted in enriching the learned world with the Travels of NIEBUHR, is a most honourable and lasting testimonial.

Such a man was just adapted to feel the worth and supply the defects of LOWTH ; and soon after the Lectures on Hebrew Poetry were published in England, MICHAELIS began to prepare an edition in Germany with copious notes, the first volume of which was published at Goettingen in 1758, and the second in 1761. These notes contain a rich treasure of Oriental learning, and are interspersed with admirable hints in regard to the general principles of interpreting the Sacred Writings, of which succeeding commentators have availed themselves ; and the germ of not a few of the splendid works which have given Germany so much reputation within the last half century, may be traced to these remarks of MICHAELIS. He is deservedly styled the Patri-



arch of Sacred Literature in Germany, for no man has ever accomplished so much for the cause in that country, and under so great disadvantages. Still, as a writer he is not free from faults. His style is discursive and loose, and sometimes degenerates to downright prattle; with all his learning and perspicacity he is sadly deficient in taste, and with all his love of truth he frequently runs wild in the regions of conjecture. Sometimes he proposes an interpretation so tasteless and strange, that we can scarcely believe him serious; and sometimes he evolves a fancy so uncouth and ludicrous, that we are surprised into a laugh: and for these, his natural offspring, he always manifests a most tender and devoted affection.

For several years the learned world appear to have remained satisfied with the labours of LOWTH and MICHAELIS, and but little more was done in this branch of Sacred Literature till the time of JOHN GODFREY HERDER. He was born at Morungen in Prussia in the year 1741. The poverty of his parents and the extreme delicacy of his own health obstructed his early education, though at one time he attended the Lectures of the celebrated KANT and other distinguished professors; and he was the chosen companion and counsellor of the poet GOETHE. After passing through various vicissitudes, not a little vexatious and irritating to the sensibilities of a man of genius, he was appointed Superintendent of Ecclesiastical affairs in the Dutchy of Saxe-Weimar, an employment which he held till his death in 1803.

The astonishing variety and uniform success of the literary efforts of HERDER, are almost without example. To the genius of a poet and the intellectual refinement of an accomplished scholar, he added the persevering and unremitted industry of a German GELEHRTE. His sensibilities were painfully acute; his whole soul was taste; and he seemed always to write from instinct rather than reflection. The present object of thought, whatever it might be, became so completely a part of his own mind, that his historical descriptions have all the vivacity and charm of a picture of the fancy: and he enters so readily and entirely into all the thoughts and feelings of the ancient Oriental nations, that, while reading his writings, we seem to be convers-

ing with a disembodied spirit, who has left his seat in Paradise for the very purpose of informing us how men thought<sup>a</sup> and felt in those by-gone days when he dwelt on earth. The writings to which I here particularly refer, are the first part of his *Letters on the Study of Theology*, and his *Spirit of Hebrew Poetry*; for his other literary labours, numerous and admirable as they are, have little concern with the subject of the present work.

Thus have I attempted to give a brief sketch of the three great masters of that department of literature to which the following pages are devoted. Three characters more entirely dissimilar it would be difficult to find; and each seems admirably fitted to correct the imperfections of the others. If you would ascertain the great principles on which you must judge of the Hebrew poetry, and become acquainted with its characteristic features, study LOWTH; if you desire to know more of the precise idea which the Hebrew poets intend to express, and to trace with philological accuracy the sources of their language and imagery, follow the criticisms of MICHAELIS; but if you would lay aside the philosopher and the critic, and give yourself up to intellectual enjoyment, if you would have the same sensations and the same thoughts, while chanting the Hebrew poetry, which the ancient Hebrews themselves had, catch the tuneful notes of HERDER.

Other distinguished scholars, as NACHTIGALL, JUSTI, and DE WETTE, have laboured successfully in this branch of study, but we have not time here to give them a particular notice.

In the year 1787 MR. GREGORY published an English translation of the *Lectures on Hebrew Poetry*. It was impossible to do complete justice, in a translation, to the sonorous, chaste, and elegant Latin style of LOWTH; but MR. GREGORY has accomplished all that could reasonably be expected. Sometimes, indeed, the dignified conciseness and expressive energy of the Latin becomes weakly diffuse and almost bombastic in the English; but on the whole the translation is faithful, and executed in a style of remarkable neatness and purity. It was a great error of the translator, and one into which he was led, it would seem, by the judgement of others rather than his own, to substitute English translations of Scripture, drawn from various sources and of very



unequal merit, for the inimitable Latin versions of LOWTH. MR. GREGORY translated some of the notes of MICHAELIS, and these he has sometimes essentially improved; for the diffuse and rather awkward Latin of the German Professor is generally rendered into very concise and graceful English. He also added to his edition some notes of his own and some by his friends, all of them well meant and several of them well written.

In the year 1815, DR. E. F. C. ROSENMUELLER, Professor of the Oriental Languages at Leipsic, the most laborious, and in some respects the most valuable Scriptural Commentator of the present day, published an edition of LOWTH with additional notes, in which he designed to correct the errors and supply the defects of MICHAELIS. The long experience and extensive attainments of ROSENMUELLER in this department of study, enabled him to make many very valuable additions.

In preparing the present edition for the press, the Editor has done all in his power to adapt it to the existing state of biblical learning, and make it as useful as possible to the American scholar. For this purpose the translation of GREGORY has been revised throughout, and in many places corrected; and the most valuable notes appended to his edition, have been selected for this, some of them entire and some abridged. The Editor has examined all the most important works which have appeared on the subject since the time of MICHAELIS, and extracted from them whatever seemed necessary to complete the view of the various subjects introduced, and to correct the errors of preceding writers. In this way all the notes which bear the name of ROSENMUELLER, SIR WILLIAM JONES, HERDER, EICHHORN, GESENIUS, DE WETTE, RAW, HOLLMANN, and some others, were selected expressly for this edition. He has also every where referred to the most recent sources of information, that the student who wishes to pursue the investigation of any particular point, may know where to find the requisite aid; and he has written many new notes, which are distinguished from the others by the signature S. Whatever may be thought of the value or importance of these original notes, they have cost not a little labour and study. For the sake of convenient reference, the notes are placed by themselves and

each of them furnished with an appropriate title. Doubtless there are deficiencies, and probably there are errors, in this edition ; but these I hope are neither of such a nature nor of so frequent occurrence, as essentially to diminish the usefulness of the work.

I am quite certain that every scholar will thank me for enriching this edition with the classical and elegant Latin translations of *LOWTH*. As specimens of this species of composition, they seem to me unequalled for chasteness, simplicity, expressiveness, and beauty. Possibly I may incur the displeasure of some for having admitted so much of Latin into the notes. I have never inserted a Latin note where I did not suppose the original to be far more valuable than any translation that could possibly be made. This is certainly the case with all the direct versions of Scripture (which make up a large part of the Latin notes), for a translation of a translation is of all things the most insipid and unmeaning. The same principle is applicable to all those notes which develop some characteristic intellectual peculiarity of the author ; for those delicate shapings and indefinable colours which every original writer gives to his own thoughts in his own language, are unavoidably lost in a translation. Most of the Latin notes of *MICHAELIS* owe their insertion to this circumstance. I wished to give the American scholar an opportunity to become acquainted with that eminent critic as he really is ; with his own loose, careless garb, and the good-natured face, in which he always appears when at home. The notes of *ROSENMUELLER* are so pure in their style and so perspicuous in their structure, and his Latin writings are coming into such general use with the theologians of our country, that I thought it would be a useless and a degrading labour to change their original form ; and the simple, charming, mellifluous Latin of *SIR WILLIAM JONES*, every man capable of reading it, would deem it little less than sacrilege to stifle by translation. Wherever the Latin of a philologist is embarrassed in its structure or encumbered by foreign idioms, I am willing to translate it ; but every theological student ought to have skill and practice enough to read a simple and pure Latin style with ease and pleasure, and if the publication of the present work shall contribute in any degree to the accomplishment of so desirable a



result, one ardent wish of my heart will be gratified. Many of the most valuable works on Sacred Literature, to which every student ought to have ready access, are written in Latin; and Scriptural translations into that language, which has never been degraded in our minds by being made the vehicle of popular intercourse, are free from all vulgar associations, and can be read with peculiar pleasure. / On this point I would say with SIR WILLIAM JONES: *Sermonis Latini suavitatem non sentimus, ut Romani; sed ita tamen sentimus, ut delectemur: cur ideo, cum tantæ sint in vita molestiæ, una hac delectatione careamus?*

On the importance of the subject of the following pages I trust I need say but little. The principles here discussed are radically connected with the interpretation of the Word of God. The greater part of the Old Testament is poetry, and poetry too of a very peculiar and most impassioned kind; and by rules applicable only to poetical language, ought this poetry to be interpreted. Yet many pay very little regard to this important peculiarity; they make scarcely any distinction between the poetic and prosaic portions of the Bible, and employ quotations from both as if they had been written with the closest attention to metaphysical precision, and in view of all the subtleties of modern philosophy. To what strange conclusions should we be led, were we to interpret MILTON's *Paradise Lost* in the same spirit and by the same rules with which we should read President EDWARDS on the *Freedom of the Will*? To conclusions scarcely less monstrous have some theological writers been betrayed by want of attention to the poetical costume of the Bible. Such errors give learned infidels their only occasion of reviling, and deter men of taste from the study of the Scriptures. Let the Bible be freed from the mistaken glosses by which its beauties have been obscured, the mouths of infidels will be stopped, and men of taste will be allured to a diligent and repeated perusal of the sacred pages.

The treasures of the Bible are not yet exhausted, and enough still remains to be discovered to reward the labours of the most arduous investigation. The use which our older divines have generally made of the Scriptures, is almost entirely theological. In them they sought only theological sentiments; and to the re-

Shaking thoughts the apostle says of men who  
believe in Calvinism with all the shackles  
of orthodoxy - I love him - I hate thee -

mainder of their contents, to their high antiquity, to their deep interest as containing the record of the very first developement of the human mind, to the striking peculiarities of their history, structure, and language, they gave little attention. They read the Bible, and commented upon it, very much as if it were a modern book, written by some members of their own communion. Yet the great truths of religion are engraved so plainly on its pages, that the strong good sense of our old divines could not fail to perceive them. In their theological writings, the leading doctrines of the Scriptures are clearly stated and eloquently defended, and oftentimes admirably elucidated. Hence, though the great truths of the Bible have long been familiar to the student of English theology, the literature of the Bible is still, to a great extent, enveloped in darkness. We are enriched by the gold, but the delightful region in which the mines are situated, is still unexplored; and other mines yet remain to be opened, and still richer treasures to be discovered.

Let no one, however, suppose that he can make any advances in this department of literature without long and thorough study. The first and indispensable requisite is a perfect familiarity with the Hebrew language. To attempt to investigate the literary beauties of the Bible by means of translations, is like attempting to study the great masters of the art of painting by means of wood cuts. To pretend to do it with a halting, imperfect knowledge of the language, is like pretending to an acquaintance with the same great masters by examining the wrong side of their canvass. Here a student must labour and be a student in reality. Oriental languages, feelings, and modes of thought, are not acquired in a moment. The Oriental Muses must be wooed in order to be won. The student must read much, and think closely, and habituate himself to patient and mature reflection; and perhaps have but little to show after all his toil. But that little is pure gold, and he knows its value, and in the silent joy of his heart, blesses God for the possession. To contribute in the smallest degree towards awakening such a spirit and exciting to such effort in a cause so noble, is a privilege for which any mortal man ought to be grateful.

Considerations such as these have induced me to undertake the task of preparing for the press a new edition of **LOWTH'S** Lectures, much enlarged, and, as I would hope, considerably improved, and properly adapted to the present state of Sacred Literature in our country. To the Class of theological students, by whose request I commenced the work, and to Professor **STUART**, by whose advice I have been aided in the execution of it, I now cheerfully commit the result of my labours.

**CALVIN E. STOWE.**

Theological Seminary,  
Andover, Oct. 1, 1838.



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# LECTURE I.

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## THE INTRODUCTION.

### OF THE USES AND DESIGN OF POETRY.

The purpose of poetry is to instruct while it gives pleasure; instruction being the end, and pleasure the means—Illustrated by examples from the different species of poetry—The Didactic—The Epic—Tragedy—Lyric—the lighter kinds of poetry, which are calculated as well for the amusement of our leisure, as for the ornament and improvement of literature. Sacred poetry; whence a transition to the immediate object of these Lectures.

THOUGH our present meeting be, on some accounts, rather earlier than I could have wished; (A) yet I cheerfully embrace the opportunity which it affords me of assuring you, gentlemen, that to this undertaking (whether considered as a duty imposed, or as a favour conferred upon me) I bring, if no other accomplishment, at least industry and inclination. I could, indeed, more patiently bear to be accused of wanting genius, fluency, or elegance, than of wanting diligence in the exercise of that office, to which your authority has called me, or gratitude in the acceptance of that favour, which (whatever it be in itself) is undoubtedly great, since conferred on me by you. For to judge rightly of obligations of this kind, regard must be had not only to the favour itself, but to the persons who confer it, and to the person on whom it is conferred. When, therefore, I reflect, that the station, to which I am invited, has been adorned by men of the first rank and genius in learning; when I regard you, whose favour can add dignity to the most respectable characters; when, in fine, I consider myself, who could never have expected or hoped from my own merits for any public testimony of your approbation; I receive this appointment as an honour, for which the utmost exertions of labour and assiduity will be but a very inadequate return. This part of my duty, however, though feebly and imperfectly, I would wish you to believe I most willingly perform: for to an ingenuous mind nothing can be more agreeable

than the expression, or even the sense of gratitude ; and the remembrance of the obligation will rather stimulate than depress. Other considerations have, I must confess, rendered me not a little solicitous : I am appointed to superintend a particular department of science, which you have constantly distinguished by your presence and attention ; and a subject is to be discussed, which not only you have judged worthy of your cultivation, and the public countenance of the University, but which has hitherto received in this place all the embellishments of grace and elegance, of which it is naturally susceptible. Should it therefore fall into neglect or disrepute hereafter, I fear, that I should be compelled to acknowledge the fault to have been mine, and not that of the institution itself.

Whatever degree of success indeed may attend my endeavours, let it not for a moment be suspected, that the design is not altogether deserving of approbation. For can there be any thing of more real importance to literature itself ; can any thing be more consistent with the ends for which this University was founded, than that the art, of whose assistance every other art and profession has so greatly availed itself, should be assigned a place among the rest ? That art, so venerable for its antiquity, so delightful in itself, that art, which is in a manner congenial to humanity, and which sets off nature by the most agreeable representation of her beauties : which among the ignorant and the learned, the idle and the studious, has ever obtained favour, admiration, and regard. Nothing surely can be more worthy of a liberal and accomplished mind, than to perceive what is perfect, and what is defective in an art, the beauties of which frequently lie beneath the surface ; to understand what is graceful, what is becoming, in what its excellencies consist, and in a word, to discover and relish those delicate touches of grace and elegance, that lie beyond the reach of vulgar apprehension. From these subtile researches after beauty and taste, there is also the fairest reason to apprehend that the judgement itself will receive some accessions of strength and acuteness, which it may successfully employ upon other objects, and upon other occasions. Such at least appear to have been the sentiments of that excellent person,<sup>1</sup> to whose munificence poetry has been long indebted for her admission into the circle of those sciences which are cultivated in this University. For, possessing a mind not only instructed in the most useful branches of knowledge, but adorn-

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<sup>1</sup> The poetic lecture was instituted by HENRY BIRKHEAD, L. L. D. formerly Fellow of All Souls.

ed with the most elegant arts; and having imbibed the first principles of education in a seminary, where the most important and sacred subjects, recommended by all the elegance of polite literature, have been heretofore, and still continue to be, studied with vigour and effect; he saw and experienced, how much an attention to these elegancies would contribute to the investigation or illustration of the severer branches of erudition, and how strict the alliance between philosophy and the muses.

The design, therefore, of the author of this institution, as well as the usual practice on occasions like the present, reminds me, gentlemen, of the propriety (though a matter already familiar to most of you) of premising a few such observations, as appear least exceptionable, concerning the end and utility of the poetic art.

Poetry is commonly understood to have two objects in view, namely, advantage and pleasure, or rather an union of both. I wish those who have furnished us with this definition, had rather proposed utility as its ultimate object, (u) and pleasure as the means by which that end may be effectually accomplished. The philosopher and the poet indeed seem principally to differ in the means, by which they pursue the same end. Each sustains the character of a preceptor, which the one is thought best to support, if he teach with accuracy, with subtlety, and with perspicuity; the other, with splendour, harmony, and elegance. The one makes his appeal to reason only, independent of the passions; the other addresses the reason in such a manner, as even to engage the passions on his side. The one proceeds to virtue and truth by the nearest and most compendious ways; the other leads to the same point through certain deflexions and deviations, by a winding, but pleasanter path. It is the part of the former so to describe and explain these objects, that we must necessarily become acquainted with them; it is the part of the latter so to dress and adorn them, that of our own accord we must love and embrace them.

I therefore lay it down as a fundamental maxim, that poetry is useful, chiefly because it is agreeable; and should I, as we are apt to do, attribute too much to my favourite occupation, I trust philosophy will forgive me, when I add, that the writings of the poet are more useful than those of the philosopher, inasmuch as they are more agreeable. To illustrate this position by well known examples: Can it be supposed that the more learned Romans, when they became devoted to the doctrine of Epicurus, did not more highly esteem, and

more frequently apply to the admirable poem of Lucretius, than to Catius, or Amafanius, or even the commentaries of Epicurus himself? Who can believe that even the most tasteless could peruse the writings on agriculture, either of the learned Varro, or (not to mention the elder Cato) of Columella, an author by no means deficient in elegance, with the same pleasure and attention as that most delightful and most perfect work, the Georgics of Virgil? A work in which he has equalled the most respectable writers in the solidity of his matter, and has greatly excelled the most elegant in the incredible harmony of his numbers. (c) On the contrary, if Manilius, who is numbered (and rightly if we may credit his own testimony) among the writers of the Augustan age, has treated the engaging science of astronomy in such low and inelegant verse, as even scarcely to excel Julius Firmicus, a prose writer on the same subject in a less polished age, I will allow him the merit of a philosopher and astronomer, but never can account him a poet. For what is a poet, destitute of harmony, of grace, and of all that conduces to allurements and delight? or how should we derive advantage or improvement from an author, whom no man of taste can endure to read? The reason, therefore, why poetry is so studious to embellish her precepts with a certain inviting sweetness,

“Et quasi Musaeo dulci contingere melle,”

is plainly, by such seasoning to conciliate favour to her doctrine, as is the practice even of physicians, who temper with pleasant flavours their least agreeable medicines :

“Ut puerorum aetas improvida ludificetur  
Laborum tenus, interea perpotet amarum  
Absinthii laticem, deceptaque non capiatur;”

as Lucretius expresses himself in illustration of his own design, as well as that of poetry in general.

But if it be manifest, even in authors who directly profess improvement and advantage, that those will most efficaciously instruct, who afford most entertainment; the same will be still more apparent in those, who, dissembling the intention of instruction, exhibit only the blandishments of pleasure; and while they treat of the most important things, of all the principles of moral action, all the offices of life, yet laying aside the severity of the preceptor, adduce at once all the decorations of elegance, and all the attractions of amusement :  
 \* who display, as in a picture, the actions, the manners, the pursuits and passions of men; and by the force of imitation and fancy, by



the harmony of numbers, by the taste and variety of imagery, captivate the affections of the reader, and imperceptibly, or perhaps reluctantly, impel him to the pursuit of virtue. Such is the real purpose of heroic poetry; such is the noble effect produced by the perusal of Homer. And who so thoughtless, or so callous, as not to feel incredible pleasure in that most agreeable occupation; who is not moved, astonished, enraptured by the inspiration of that most sublime genius? Who so inanimate as not to see, not to feel inscribed, or as it were imprinted upon his heart, his most excellent maxims concerning human life and manners? From philosophy a few cold precepts may be deduced; in history some dull and spiritless examples of manners may be found: here we have the energetic voice of virtue herself, here we behold her animated form. Poetry addresses her precepts not to the reason alone; she calls the passions to her aid: she not only exhibits examples, but infixes them in the mind. She softens the wax with her peculiar ardour, and renders it more plastic to the artist's hand. Thus does Horace most truly and most justly apply this commendation to the poets:

“*Quid quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,  
Plenius ac melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit:*”

Plainer or more completely, because they do not perplex their disciples with the dry detail of parts and definitions, but so perfectly and so accurately delineate, by examples of every kind, the forms of the human passions and habits, the principles of social and civilized life, that he, who from the schools of philosophy should turn to the representations of Homer, would feel himself transported from a narrow and intricate path to an extensive and flourishing field. Better, because the poet teaches not by maxims and precepts, and in the dull, sententious form; but by the harmony of verse, by the beauty of imagery, by the ingenuity of the fable, by the exactness of imitation, he allures and interests the mind of the reader, he fashions it to habits of virtue, and in a manner informs it with the spirit of integrity itself.

But if, from the heroic we turn to the tragic Muse, to which Aristotle<sup>2</sup> indeed assigns the preference, because of the true and perfect imitation, we shall yet more clearly evince the superiority of poetry over philosophy, on the principle of its being more agreeable. Tragedy is, in truth, no other than philosophy introduced upon the

<sup>2</sup> Poet. Cap. ult.

stage, retaining all its natural properties, remitting nothing of its native gravity, but assisted and embellished by other favouring circumstances. What point, for instance, of moral discipline, have the tragic writers of Greece left untouched, or unadorned? What duty of life, what principle of political economy, what motive or precept for the government of the passions, what commendation of virtue is there, which they have not treated of with fulness, variety, and learning? The moral of *Æschylus* (not only a poet, but a Pythagorean) will ever be admired. Nor were *Sophocles* and *Euripides* less illustrious for the reputation of wisdom; the latter of whom was the disciple of *Socrates* and *Anaxagoras*, and was known among his friends by the title of the dramatic philosopher. In these authors surely, the allurements of poetry afforded some accession to the empire of philosophy; nor indeed has any man arrived at the summit of poetic fame, who did not previously lay the foundation of his art in true philosophy.

Should it be objected, that some have been eminent in this walk of poetry, who never studied in the schools of the philosophers, nor enjoyed the advantages of an education above the common herd of mankind; I answer, that I am not contending about the vulgar opinion, or concerning the meaning of a word: the man who, by the force of genius and observation, has arrived at a perfect knowledge of mankind, who has acquainted himself with the natural powers of the human mind, and the causes by which the passions are excited and repressed; who not only in words can explain, but can delineate to the senses every motion of the soul; who can excite, can temper and regulate the passions; such a man, though he may not have acquired erudition by the common methods, I esteem a true philosopher. The passion of jealousy, its causes, circumstances, its progress and effects, I hold to be more accurately, more copiously, more satisfactorily described in one of the dramas of *Shakspeare*, than in all the disputations of the schools of philosophy.

Now if tragedy be of so truly a philosophical nature; and if to all the force and gravity of wisdom it add graces and allurements peculiarly its own, the harmony of verse, the contrivance of the fable, the excellence of imitation, the truth of action; shall we not say that philosophy must yield to poetry in point of utility? or shall we not rather say, that the former is greatly indebted to the latter, of whose assistance and recommendation it makes so advantageous a use, in order to attain its particular purpose, utility or improvement?



"But if the force of imitation and fable be so great, the force of truth itself must surely appear much greater: we should therefore apply to history rather than to poetry for instruction in morals." This however is a mistaken notion. History is confined within too narrow limits; history is subject to laws peculiar to itself, and too severe to admit of such an application. It relates things as they really were, it traces events under the guidance of authority; it must exhibit what has happened, not what might or ought to have happened. It must not deviate in quest of reasonable instruction or plausible conjecture, but confine itself to that path, which the stubbornness of fact has prescribed. History treats of things and persons which have been in actual existence; the subjects of poetry are infinite and universal. The one investigates causes through the uncertain medium of conjecture; the other demonstrates them with clearness and certainty. The one catches the casual glimpses of truth, whenever they break forth to the view; the other contemplates her unclouded appearance. History pursues her appointed journey by a direct path; poetry ranges uncontrolled over the wide expanse of nature. The former must make her precepts subservient to the subject; the latter forms a subject subordinate to her precepts and design. For these reasons, poetry is defined by Aristotle to be something of a more serious and philosophical nature than history;<sup>3</sup> nor is our Bacon (a name not inferior in literature) of a different sentiment. The subject itself, and the authority of so great a man, require that the passage should be quoted in his own words. "Since the sensible world is in dignity inferior to the rational soul; poetry seems to endow human nature with that which lies beyond the power of history, and to gratify the mind with at least the shadow of things, where the substance cannot be had. For if the matter be properly considered, an argument may be drawn from poetry, that a superior dignity in things, a more perfect order, and a more beautiful variety delights the soul of man, than is found in nature since the fall. As, therefore, the actions and events, which are the subject of true history, are not of sufficient amplitude to content the mind of man; poetry is at hand, and invents actions of a more heroic nature. Because true history reports the success of events not proportionably to desert, or according to the virtue or vice that has been displayed

<sup>3</sup> Καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαίτερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστίν. ARIST. POET. c. 9.

in them; poetry corrects this, and represents events and fortunes according to justice and merit: Because true history, from the obvious similarity of actions, and the satiety which this circumstance must occasion, frequently creates a distaste in the mind; poetry cheers and refreshes it, exhibiting things uncommon, varied, and full of vicissitude. As poetry, therefore, contributes not only to pleasure, but to magnanimity and good morals; it is deservedly supposed to participate in some measure of divine inspiration; since it raises the mind, and fills it with sublime ideas, by proportioning the appearances of things to the desires of the mind; and not submitting the mind to things, like reason and history."<sup>4</sup>(D)

That elevation of sentiment, that inspiration, that usefulness in forming the manners, is however by no means so peculiar to the epic (to which that great man chiefly refers in this passage) as to exclude the claim of every other species of poetry; there are others which also deserve to partake in the commendation; and first the ode,

*"Ingentes animos angusto in pectore versans,"*

which, though in some respects inferior to what are called the higher species of poetry, yields to none in force, ardour, and sometimes even in dignity and solemnity. Every species of poetry has in fact its peculiar mode of acting on the human feelings; the general effect is perhaps the same. The epic accomplishes its design with more leisure, with more consideration and care, and therefore probably with greater certainty. It more gradually insinuates itself, it penetrates, it moves, it delights; now rising to a high degree of sublimity, now subsiding to its accustomed smoothness; and conducting the reader through a varied and delightful scene, it applies a gentle constraint to the mind, making its impression by the forcible nature of this application, but more especially by its continuance. The ode, on the contrary, strikes with an instantaneous effect, amazes, and as it were, storms the affections. The one may be compared to a flame, which, fanned by the winds, gradually spreads itself on all sides, and at last involves every object in the conflagration; the other to a flash of lightning, which instantaneously bursts forth,

*"Magnamque cadens, magnamque revertens*

*Dat stragem late, sparsosque recolligit ignes."*

The amazing power of lyric poetry in directing the passions, in

<sup>4</sup> De Augm. Scien. L. II. 13.



forming the manners, in maintaining civil life, and particularly, in exciting and cherishing that generous elevation of sentiment, on which the very existence of public virtue seems to depend, will be sufficiently apparent by only contemplating those monuments of genius, which Greece has bequeathed to posterity. If we examine the poems of Pindar (which, though by no means accounted the most excellent of their kind, by some strange fatality are almost the only specimens that remain) how exquisite must have been the pleasure, how vivid the sensation to the Greek, whose ordinary amusement it was to sing, or hear them sung! For this kind of entertainment was not confined to persons of taste and learning, but had grown into general use. When he heard his gods, his heroes, his ancestors received into the number of the gods, celebrated in a manner so glorious, so divine, would not his bosom glow with the desire of fame, with the most fervid emulation of virtue, with a patriotism, immoderate perhaps, but honourable and useful in the highest degree? Is it wonderful, that he should be so elevated with this greatness of mind (shall I call it?) or rather insolence and pride, as to esteem every other people mean, barbarous and contemptible, in comparison with himself and his own countrymen? It is almost unnecessary to remind this assembly, that, in the sacred games (which afforded so much support to the warlike virtue of Greece<sup>5</sup>) no inconsiderable share of dignity and esteem resulted from the verses of the poets; nor did the Olympic crown exhibit a more ample reward to the candidate for victory, than the encomium of Pindar or Stesichorus. I wish indeed, that time had not invidiously deprived us of the works of the latter, whose majesty and excellence commanded universal applause, whom Dionysius preferred before every other Lyric poet, because he made choice of the sublimest and most splendid subjects, and in the amplification of them preserved most completely the manners and the dignity of his characters. To Alcæus, however, the same author attributes the most excellent manner of treating political subjects.<sup>6</sup> As a man, indeed, how great! as a citizen how strenuous! What a spirited defender of the laws and constitution of his country! What a vigorous opposer of tyrants! who consecrated equally his sword and his lyre on the altar of freedom! whose prophetic Muse, ranging through every region, acted as the sacred

<sup>5</sup> Consult the dissertation of the learned GILBERT WEST on the Olympic games. Sect. xvii.

<sup>6</sup> DION. HALICAR. T. II. p. 123. Edit. Hudson.

guardian, not for the present moment only, but for future ages ; not of his own city alone, but of the whole commonwealth of Greece. Poetry such as this, so vehement, so animated, is certainly to be esteemed highly efficacious as well in exciting the human mind to virtue, as in purifying it from every mean and vicious propensity ; but still more especially does it conduce to cherish and support that vigour of soul, that generous temper and spirit, which is both the offspring and guardian of liberty. Could an apprehension arise, that another Pisistratus would meditate the enslaving of that city, where at every banquet, nay, in the streets and in the meanest assemblies of the common people, that convivial ode was daily sung which bears the name of Callistratus ? An author known to us only by this composition, which however sufficiently demonstrates him to have been an admirable poet and an excellent citizen :

Ἐν μίγτον κλαδί τὸ ξίφος φορήσω,  
 Ὡσπερ Ἀρμόδιος κ' Ἀριστογείτων,  
 Ὅτι τὸν τύραννον κτανίτην,  
 Ἰστούμους τ' Ἀθήνας ἐποιήσαίτην.  
 Φίλταδ' Ἀρμόδι οὐτι πον τίθνηκας,  
 Νήσοις δ' ἐν μακίρων σέ φασιν εἶναι,  
 Ἰναπερ ποδάκης Ἀχιλεὺς,  
 Τυδείδην τε φασὶν Διομήδεα.  
 Ἐν μίγτον κλαδί τὸ ξίφος φορήσω,  
 Ὡσπερ Ἀρμόδιος κ' Ἀριστογείτων,  
 Ὅτ' Ἀθηναίης ἐν θυσίαις  
 Ἄνδρα τίραντον Ἰππαρχον ἐκαινίτην.  
 Αἰὲ σφῶν κλίος ἴσσεται κατ' αἶαν,  
 Φίλταδ' Ἀρμόδι κ' Ἀριστογείτων,  
 Ὅτι τὸν τύραννον κτάνετον,  
 Ἰστούμους τ' Ἀθήνας ἐποιήσατον. (x)

If after the memorable *Ides of March*, any one of the Tyrannicides had delivered to the populace such a poem as this, had introduced it at the Suburra, to the assemblies of the Forum, or had put it into the mouths of the common people, the dominion of the Cæsars and its adherents would have been totally extinguished : and I am firmly persuaded, that one stanza of this simple ballad of Harmodius would have been more effectual than all the Philippics of Cicero.

There are some other species of poetry, which with us generally appear in an easy and familiar style, but formerly assumed sometimes a graver and more important character. Such is the elegy ; I do not speak of the light and amorous elegy of the moderns, but that

ancient, serious, sacred and didactic elegy, the preceptress of morals, the lawgiver of nations, the oracle of virtue. Not to enter into a detail of authors, of whose works we are not in possession, and of whose merits we consequently can form no adequate judgement, it will be sufficient to instance Solon, the most venerable character of antiquity, the wisest of legislators, and withal a poet of no mean reputation. When any thing difficult or perplexing occurred in the administration of public affairs, we are informed that he had recourse to poetry.<sup>7</sup> Were the laws to be maintained or enforced upon any particular emergency; was the indolence or licentiousness of the citizens to be reprov'd; were their minds to be stimulated to the love of liberty, he immediately attacked them with some poetical production, bold, animated and severe, in the highest tone of censorial gravity, and yet in no respect deficient in elegance:

Ἐκ νεφέλης πίλεται χιόνος μένος ἰδὲ χαλάζης,  
 Βροντὴ δ' ἐκ λαμπρῆς γίγνεται ὠστρεοπής·  
 Ἄνδρῶν δ' ἐκ μεγάλων πόλεις ὕλνται· εἰς δὲ μονῶρχου  
 Δῆμος ἁδραεὶ δουλοσύνην ἔπεισεν.

It is a well known fact, that Athens was altogether indebted for the recovery of Salamis to the verses of Solon; even contrary to their own inclination and intention. After they had, from repeated overthrows, fallen into the deepest despair, insomuch that it was made a capital offence, even to propose the renewal of the war, or the reclaiming of the island, such was the influence of that single poem, which begins—"Let us march to Salamis," that, as if pronounced by a prophet, instinct with divine enthusiasm, the people, propelled by a kind of celestial inspiration, flew immediately to arms, became clamorous for war, and sought the field of battle with such incredible ardour, that by the violence of their onset, after a great slaughter of the enemy, they achieved a most decisive victory.

We have also some remains of the celebrated Tyrtaeus, who

"mares animos in martia bella  
 Versibus exacuit;"

The whole scope and subject of his compositions, is the celebration of valour and patriotism, and the immortal glory of those, who bravely fell in battle:—compositions, which could impart some degree of courage even to the timid and unmanly; by which, indeed, he ele-

<sup>7</sup> See PLUTARCH and DIOG. LAERT. Life of Solon.



vated the minds of the Lacedemonians, which had been long debilitated and depressed, to the certain hope of victory. The fact is well known, and had it not been corroborated by the testimony of so many authors, it would doubtless have been thought by some incredible; though I confess it appears to me no less supported by the reason of things than by the authority of the historian. It is impossible that men should act otherwise than with the most heroic ardour, the most undaunted resolution, who sung to the martial pipe, when arranged in military order, marching to the onset, or perhaps actually engaged, such strains as these :

Θυμῷ γῆς περὶ τῆσδε μαχόμεθα, καὶ περὶ παίδων  
Θνήσκωμεν, ψυχῶν μηκέτι φειδόμενοι  
Ω νεοὶ ἀλλὰ μάχεσθε παρ' ἀλλήλοισι μένοντες,  
Μηδὲ φυγῆς αἰσχρῶς ἄρχεσθε, μηδὲ φόβου.  
Ἀλλὰ τις εὖ διαβάς μανέντω, πόσιν ἀμφοτέρωσι  
Στηριχθεὶς ἐπὶ γῆς, χαίλος ὁδοῦσι δακῶν.  
Διεξιτερῇ δ' ἐν χειρὶ τινασσάτω ὄβριμον ἔγχος,  
Κινεῖτω δὲ λόφον δεινὸν ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς.  
Καὶ πόδα πῶρ' ποδὶ θείῃ, καὶ ἐπ' ἀσπίδος ἀσπίδ' ἔρεισας,  
Ἐν δὲ λόφον τε λόφος, καὶ κυνέην κυνέην,  
Καὶ στήρνον στήρνω πεπλημῖνος ἀνδρὶ μάχισθω,  
Ἡ ξίφειος κόπην, ἥ δόρυ μακρὸν ἰλὼν.  
Οὐδέποτε κλῖος ἰσθλὸν ἀπόλλυται, σὺ δ' ὄνομ' αὐτοῦ,  
Ἀλλ', ὑπὸ γῆς περὶ ἰῶν, γίγνεται ἀθάνατος,  
Ὅστιν' ὀλιστεύοντα, μένοντά τε, μαρνάμενόν τε  
Γῆς περὶ καὶ παίδων, θούρος Ἄρης ὀλισσῇ.

Not entirely to omit the lighter kinds of poetry, many will think that we allow them full enough, when we suppose their utility to consist in the entertainment which they afford. Nor is this, gentlemen, altogether to be despised, if it be considered that this entertainment, this levity itself, affords relaxation to the mind when wearied with the laborious investigation of truth; that it unbends the understanding, after intense application; restores it when debilitated; and refreshes it, even by an interchange and variety of study. In this we are countenanced by the example and authority of the greatest men of Greece, by that of Solon, Plato, and Aristotle; among the Romans, by that of Scipio and Lælius, Julius and Augustus Cæsar, Varro and Brutus, who filled up the intervals of their more important engagements, their severer studies, with the agreeableness and hilarity of their poetical talent. Nature indeed seems in this most wisely to have consulted for us, who, while she impels us to the knowledge of truth, which is frequently remote, and only to be



prosecuted with indefatigable industry, has provided also these pleasing recreations, as a refuge to the mind, in which it might occasionally shelter itself, and find an agreeable relief from langour and anxiety.

But there is yet a further advantage to be derived from these studies, which ought not to be neglected; for besides possessing in reserve a certain solace of your labours, from the same repository you will also be supplied with many of the brightest ornaments of literature. The first object is, indeed, to perceive and comprehend clearly the reasons, principles, and relations of things; the next is to be able to explain your conceptions not only with perspicuity, but with a degree of elegance. For in this respect we are all of us in some measure fastidious: we are seldom contented with a jejune and naked exposition even of the most serious subjects; some of the seasonings of art, some ornaments of style, some splendour of diction, are of necessity to be adopted; even some regard is due to the harmony of numbers, and to the gratification of the ear. In all these respects, though I grant that the language of poetry differs very widely from that of all other kinds of composition, yet he, who has bestowed some time and attention on the perusal and imitation of the poets, will, I am persuaded, find his understanding exercised and improved as it were in this Palæstra, the vigour and activity of his imagination increased, and even his manner of expression to have insensibly acquired a tinge from this elegant intercourse. Thus we observe in persons, who have been taught to dance, a certain indescribable grace and manner; though they do not form their common gesture and gait by any certain rules, yet there results from that exercise a degree of elegance, which accompanies those who have been proficient in it, even when they have relinquished the practice. Nor is it in the least improbable, that both Cæsar and Tully (the one the most elegant, the other the most eloquent of the Romans) might have derived considerable assistance from the cultivation of this branch of polite literature, since it is well known, that both of them were addicted to the reading of poetry, and even exercised in the composition of it. (r) This too is so apparent in the writings of Plato, that he is thought not only to have erred in his judgement, but to have acted an ungrateful part, when he excluded from his imaginary commonwealth that art, to which he was so much indebted for the splendour and elegance of his genius, from whose fountains he had derived that soft, copious, and harmonious style, for which he is so justly admired.

But to return to the nobler and more important productions of the Muses. Thus far poetry must be allowed to stand eminent among the other liberal arts ; inasmuch as it refreshes the mind when it is fatigued, soothes it when it is agitated, relieves and invigorates it when it is depressed ; as it elevates the thoughts to the admiration of what is beautiful, what is becoming, what is great and noble : nor is it enough to say, that it delivers the precepts of virtue in the most agreeable manner ; it insinuates or instils into the soul the very principles of morality itself. Moreover, since the desire of glory, innate in man, appears to be the most powerful incentive to great and heroic actions, it is the peculiar function of poetry to improve this bias of our nature, and thus to cherish and enliven the embers of virtue ; and since one of the principal employments of poetry consists in the celebration of great and virtuous actions, in transmitting to posterity the examples of the bravest and most excellent of men, and in consecrating their names to immortality ; this praise is certainly its due, that while it forms the mind to habits of rectitude by its precepts, directs it by example, excites and animates it by its peculiar force, it has also the distinguished honour of distributing to virtue the most ample and desirable rewards of its labours.

But after all, we shall think more humbly of poetry than it deserves, unless we direct our attention to that quarter, where its importance is most eminently conspicuous ; unless we contemplate it as employed on sacred subjects, and in subservience to religion. This indeed appears to have been the original office and destination of poetry ; and this it still so happily performs, that in all other cases it seems out of character, as if intended for this purpose alone. In other instances, poetry appears to want the assistance of art, but in this, to shine forth with all its natural splendour, or rather to be animated by that inspiration, which on other occasions is spoken of without being felt. These observations are remarkably exemplified in the Hebrew poetry, than which the human mind can conceive nothing more elevated, more beautiful, or more elegant ; in which the almost ineffable sublimity of the subject is fully equalled by the energy of the language, and the dignity of the style. And it is worthy of observation, that as some of these writings exceed in antiquity the fabulous ages of Greece, in sublimity they are superior to the most finished productions of that polished people. Thus if the actual origin of poetry be inquired after, it must of necessity be referred to religion ; and since it appears to be an art derived from



nature alone, peculiar to no age or nation, and only at an advanced period of society conformed to rule and method, it must be wholly attributed to the more violent affections of the heart, the nature of which is to express themselves in an animated and lofty tone, with a vehemence of expression far remote from vulgar use. It is also no less observable, that these affections break and interrupt the enunciation by their impetuosity; they burst forth in sentences pointed, earnest, rapid, and tremulous; and in some degree the style, as well as the modulation, is adapted to the emotions and habits of the mind. This is particularly the case in admiration and delight; and what passions are so likely to be excited by religious contemplations as these? What ideas could so powerfully affect a new-created mind (undepraved by habit or opinion) as the goodness, the wisdom, and the greatness of the Almighty? Is it not probable, that the first effort of rude and unpolished verse would display itself in the praise of the Creator, and flow almost involuntarily from the enraptured mind? Thus far at least is certain, that poetry has been nurtured in those sacred places, where she seems to have been first called into existence; and that her original occupation was in the temple and at the altar. However ages and nations may have differed in their religious sentiments and opinions, in this at least we find them all agreed, that the mysteries of their devotion were celebrated in verse. Of this origin poetry even yet exhibits no obscure indications, since she ever embraces a divine and sacred subject with a kind of filial tenderness and affection. To the sacred haunts of religion she delights to resort as to her native soil; there she most willingly inhabits, and there she flourishes in all her pristine beauty and vigour. But to have slightly glanced at the subject, appears sufficient for the present; we shall soon perhaps find an opportunity of entering upon a more ample discussion.(c)

I trust, indeed, that you will pardon me, gentlemen, if I do not as yet venture to explain my future plan of instruction, and the form and method which I think of pursuing. That man must have too little respect for your judgement, and by far too high an opinion of his own, who would presume to produce before you matter not sufficiently digested, not sufficiently polished and perfected by study and by the maturest consideration. I have therefore determined within myself, that nothing shall hastily or prematurely proceed from me in this assembly, nothing which is not laboured to the extent of my abilities; and that for what is wanting in genius, in erudition,

in fluency, and in every respect in which I feel myself deficient, I shall endeavour to compensate, as much as possible, by care and assiduity. If in these points I shall be enabled to perform my duty, I trust, gentlemen, that other deficiencies you will be kind enough to excuse ; and that the person whom you have honoured with your favour and attention ; with your candour and indulgence, you will continue to support.

## LECTURE II.

### THE DESIGN AND ARRANGEMENT OF THESE LECTURES.

The dignity of the subject, and its suitableness to the design of the institution—That poetry which proceeds from divine inspiration, is not beyond the province of criticism—Criticism will enable us to account for the origin of the art, as well as to form a just estimation of its dignity; that the opinion of the divine origin of poetry was common in Greece—This work purely critical: and consequently theological disquisitions will be avoided—The general distribution of the subject into three parts, the nature of the verse, the style, and the arrangement.

SOCRATES, as we read in Plato,<sup>1</sup> having been frequently admonished in a dream to apply to music; and esteeming himself bound to fulfil a duty, which appeared to have been imposed upon him by divine authority, began with composing a hymn to Apollo, and afterwards undertook to translate some of the fables of *Æsop* into verse. This he did, I apprehend, under the persuasion, that the first fruits of his poetry (which he esteemed the principal branch of the science of music<sup>2</sup>) ought to be consecrated to the immortal gods; and that it was not lawful for him, who was but little versed in those studies, to descend to lighter subjects, which perhaps might in the main be more agreeable to his genius, before he had discharged the obligations of religion. It is my intention, gentlemen, to follow the example of this great philosopher; and since the university has honoured me with this office of explaining to you the nature and principles of poetry, I mean to enter upon it from that quarter, whence he thought himself obliged to commence the study and practice of the art. I have determined, therefore, in the first place, to treat of sacred poetry, that species, I mean, which was cultivated by the ancient Hebrews, and which is peculiarly appropriated to subjects the most solemn and sublime; that should my endeavours prove unequal to so great a subject, I may, as it were, with favourable auspices,

<sup>1</sup> Phæd. sub init.

<sup>2</sup> "What then is education?—As far as respects the body, it consists in the gymnastic exercises; as far as respects the mind, it consists in harmony." Plato de Rep. Lib. II.



descend to matters of inferior importance. I undertake this office, however, with the most perfect conviction, that not only from a regard to duty it ought to be executed with diligence; but from the respectability of that body, at whose command it is undertaken, it ought to be executed with honour and reputation; nor is it merely to be considered what the intent of the institution and the improvement of the students may require, but what will be consistent with the dignity of this university. For since the university, when it gave its sanction to this species of discipline by a special degree, recommended the study of poetry, particularly because it might conduce to the improvement of the more important sciences, as well sacred as profane,<sup>3</sup> nothing could certainly appear more useful in itself, or more agreeable to the purpose of this institution, and the design of its learned patrons, than to treat of that species of poetry, which constitutes so considerable a part of sacred literature, and excels all other poetry, not less in the sublimity of the style, than in the dignity of the subject.

It would not be easy, indeed, to assign a reason, why the writings of Homer, of Pindar, and of Horace, should engross our attention and monopolize our praise, while those of Moses, of David and Isaiah pass totally unregarded. Shall we suppose that the subject is not adapted to a seminary, in which sacred literature has ever maintained a precedence? Shall we say, that it is foreign to this assembly of promising youth, of whom the greater part have consecrated the best portion of their time and labour to the same department of learning? Or must we conclude, that the writings of those men, who have accomplished only as much as human genius and ability could accomplish, should be reduced to method and theory; but that those which boast a much higher origin, and are justly attributed to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, may be considered as indeed illustrious by their native force and beauty, but not as conformable to the principles of science, nor to be circumscribed by any rules of art? It is indeed most true, that sacred poetry, if we contemplate its origin alone, is far superior to both nature and art; but if we would rightly estimate its excellencies, that is, if we wish to understand its power in exciting the human affections, we must have recourse to both: for we must consider what those affections are, and by what means they are to be excited. Moreover, as in all other branches of science, so in poetry, art or theory consists in a certain

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<sup>3</sup> See the statute relating to the poetic lecture.

knowledge derived from the careful observation of nature, and confirmed by practice and experience; for men of learning having remarked in things what was graceful, what was fit, what was conducive to the attainment of certain ends, they digested such discoveries as had been casually made, and reduced them to an established order or method: whence it is evident, that art deduces its origin from the works of genius, not that genius has been formed or directed by art; and that it is properly applied in illustrating the works of even those writers, who were either ignorant of its rules, or inattentive to them. Since then it is the purpose of sacred poetry to form the human mind to the constant habit of true virtue and piety, and to excite the more ardent affections of the soul, in order to direct them to their proper end; whoever has a clear insight into the instruments, the machinery as it were, by which this end is effected, will certainly contribute not a little to the improvement of the critical art. Now, although it be scarcely possible to penetrate to the fountains of this celestial Nile, yet it may surely be allowed us to pursue the meanders of the stream, to mark the flux and reflux of its waters, and even to conduct a few rivulets into the adjacent plains. (A)

The sacred poetry is undoubtedly entitled to the first rank in this school, since from it we are to learn both the origin of the art, and how to estimate its excellence. The commencement of other arts, however rude and imperfect, and though employed only on light and trivial matters, is an inquiry generally productive of satisfaction and delight. Here we may contemplate poetry in its very beginning; not so much the offspring of human genius, as an emanation from heaven; not gradually increasing by small accessions, but from its birth possessing a certain maturity both of beauty and strength; not administering to trifling passions, and offering its delicious incense at the shrine of vanity, but the priestess of divine truth, the internunciate between earth and heaven. For this was the first and peculiar office of poetry, on the one hand to commend to the Almighty the prayers and thanksgivings of his creatures, and to celebrate his praises;—and on the other, to display to mankind the mysteries of the divine will, and the predictions of future events; the best and noblest of all employments. It is to this observation, indeed, that I would particularly point your attention; for it is plain from the general tenour of the sacred volume, that the indications of future events have been, almost without exception, revealed in numbers and in verse; and that the same spirit was accustomed to im-

part, by its own energy, at once the presentiment of things, and to clothe it in all the magnificence, in all the elegance of poetry, that the sublimity of the style might consist with sentiments so infinitely surpassing all human conception. When considered, therefore, in this point of view, what is there of all which the most devoted admirers of poetry have ever written or fabricated in its commendation, that does not fall greatly short of the truth itself? What of all the insinuations, which its bitterest adversaries have objected against it, which is not refuted by simply contemplating the nature and design of the Hebrew poetry? Let those who affect to despise the Muses, cease to attempt, for the vices of a few, who may abuse the best of things, to bring into disrepute a most laudable talent. Let them cease to speak of that art as light or trifling in itself, to accuse it as profane or impious; that art, which has been conceded to man by the favour of his Creator, and for the most sacred purposes; that art, consecrated by the authority of God himself, and by his example in his most august ministrations.

Whether the Greeks originally derived their poetry from the fountains of nature, or received it through a different channel from a remoter source, appears a question of little importance, and not easy to be determined. Thus far, however, is evident, that an opinion was prevalent in Greece concerning the nature and origin of poetry, which appears most groundless and absurd, if we contemplate only the poetry of Greece, though truly and justly applicable to that of the Hebrews. They considered poetry as something sacred and celestial, not produced by human art or genius, but altogether a divine gift. Among them, therefore, poets were accounted sacred, the ambassadors of heaven, men favoured with an immediate intercourse and familiarity with the gods. The mysteries and ceremonies of their religion, and the worship of their deities, were all performed in verse; and the most ancient of their compositions, their oracles, always consisted of numbers. This circumstance, I must add, rendered them not only more sublime, but more deserving of credit in the eyes of the common people; for they conceived it equally the effect of divine inspiration to foresee events, and to express them in extemporaneous verse. Thus they seem to have retained some traces of an opinion impressed upon the minds of men in the very earliest ages concerning the true and ancient poetry, even after they had lost the reality itself, and when religion and poetry had, by the licentiousness of fiction, reciprocally corrupted each other. (π)



Since, therefore, in the sacred writings the only specimens of the primeval and genuine poetry are to be found, and since they are not less venerable for their antiquity than for their divine original, I conceived it my duty in the first place to investigate the nature of these writings, as far as might be consistent with the design of this institution : in other words, it is not my intention to expound to the student of theology the oracles of divine truth ; but to recommend to the notice of the youth who is addicted to the politer sciences, and studious of the elegancies of composition, some of the first and choicest specimens of poetic taste. The difficulty of the undertaking ought probably to have discouraged me from the attempt ; yet with you, gentlemen, I trust my temerity will find this excuse, namely, that I have undertaken a subject the most noble in itself, and the best adapted to the circumstances of my office. I trust that you will allow me at least the merit of distinguishing what was most worthy of this place and this assembly ; though perhaps I have too rashly engaged, without a due consideration of my own abilities.

In this disquisition it is my intention to pursue that track which the nature of the subject seems to require. Three points are to be considered in every poem : First, the argument or matter, and the manner of treating it ; what disposition, what order, and what general form is adapted to each species of composition : Secondly, the elocution and style ; in which are comprehended lively and elevated sentiments, splendour and perspicuity of arrangement, beauty and variety of imagery, and strength and elegance of diction : Lastly, the harmony of the verse, or numbers, is to be considered ; not only as intended to captivate the ear, but as adapted to the subject, and expressive of it, and as calculated to excite corresponding emotions in the soul. We shall now consider what is to be performed in each of these departments, and how far we may with safety, and with any prospect of advantage, engage in a critical examination of the Hebrew poetry.

With respect to the nature of the versification (if I may be allowed to reverse my own arrangement, and to speak of that first, which constituted the last division of my subject) I fear that little can be produced to your satisfaction or my own ; since it is manifest not only from the unsuccessful endeavours of the most learned men, but from the nature of the thing itself, that scarcely any real knowledge of the Hebrew versification is now to be attained : and the only merit to which any modern writer can lay claim, is that of distinguish-

ing certain facts (if any there be) from uncertain conjecture, and demonstrating how imperfect our information must of necessity be upon this topic. Were the inquiry, however, concerning the Hebrew metre to be wholly overlooked; yet, since some vestiges of verse are discernible, a few observations of a general nature will probably occur, which we shall in the first place slightly advert to, and afterwards, as occasion serves, particularize and explain.

That part of these lectures, on the other hand, which treats of the style of the Hebrew poetry, will afford very ample scope for disquisition; since it possesses not only all the principal excellencies which are common to poetry, but possesses many also which are proper and peculiar to itself.

In the remaining part, which though first in order and dignity, will be the last to be treated of, we must with diligence, (as considering the difficulty of the subject) and at the same time with caution engage; lest while we wander too much at large in the ample field of poetry, we should imprudently break in upon the sacred boundaries of theology. It will be our business on this occasion to distribute the Hebrew poems, according to their different species, into different classes; to consider in each what is most worthy of attention; and perhaps to compare them with those of Greece and Rome, if there be any extant of the same kind.



## PART I.

### OF THE HEBREW METRE.

מזמור

## LECTURE III.

### THE HEBREW POETRY IS METRICAL.

The necessity of inquiring into the nature of the Hebrew verse—The Hebrew poetry proved to be metrical from the alphabetical poems, and from the equality and correspondence of the sentiments ; also from the poetical diction—Some of the most obvious properties of the verse —The rhythm and mode of scanning totally lost : proved from facts—The poetical conformation of the sentences—The Greek and Latin poetry materially different from the Hebrew, from the very nature of the languages—Hence a peculiar property in the prose versions of the Hebrew poetry and the attempts to exhibit this poetry in the verse of other languages.

On the very first attempt to elucidate the nature of the sacred poetry, a question presents itself uncommonly difficult and obscure, concerning the nature of the Hebrew verse. This question I would indeed gladly have avoided, could I have abandoned it consistently with my design. But since it appears essential to every species of poetry, that it be confined to numbers, and consist of some kind of verse, (for indeed wanting this, it would not only want its most agreeable attributes, but would scarcely deserve the name of poetry) in treating of the poetry of the Hebrews, it appears absolutely necessary to demonstrate, that those parts at least of the Hebrew writings which we term poetic, are in a metrical form, and to inquire whether any thing be certainly known concerning the nature and principles of this versification or not. This part of my subject therefore I undertake, not as hoping to illustrate it by any new observations, but merely with a view of inquiring whether it will admit of any illustration at all. Even this I shall attempt with brevity and caution, as embarked upon an ocean dishonoured by the shipwreck of many eminent persons, and therefore presuming only to coast along the shore.

In the first place (notwithstanding that a contrary opinion has been supported by some of the learned) I think it will be sufficiently

apparent, if we but advert to them a little more attentively, that certain of the Hebrew writings are not only animated with the true poetic spirit, but in some degree confined to numbers. For there appear in almost every part of them such marks and vestiges of verse, as could scarcely be expected to remain in any language, after the sound and pronunciation (as is the case with the Hebrew at present) were, through extreme antiquity, become almost totally obsolete.

There existed a certain kind of poetry among the Hebrews, principally intended, it should seem, for the assistance of the memory : in which, when there was little connexion between the sentiments, a sort of order or method was preserved, by the initial letters of each line or stanza following the order of the alphabet. Of this there are several examples extant among the sacred poems ;<sup>1</sup> and in these examples the verses are so exactly marked and defined, that it is impossible to mistake them for prose ; and particularly if we attentively consider the verses, and compare them with one another, since they are in general so regularly accommodated, that word answers to word, and almost syllable to syllable. This being the case, though an appeal can scarcely be made to the ear on this occasion, the eye itself will distinguish the poetic division and arrangement, and also that some labour and accuracy has been employed in adapting the words to the measure.

The Hebrew poetry has likewise another property altogether peculiar to metrical composition. Writers who are confined within the trammels of verse, are generally indulged with the license of using words in a sense and manner remote from their common acceptation, and in some degree contrary to the analogy of the language ; so that sometimes they shorten them by taking from the number of the syllables, and sometimes venture to add a syllable for the sake of adapting them to their immediate purpose. This practice is not only effectual to the facilitating of the versification, but also to the prevention of satiety by varying the sounds, and by imparting to the style a certain peculiar colouring, which elevates it above the language of the vulgar. Poetry therefore always makes use of some such artifice, as accords best with the genius of each language. This is exemplified particularly in two respects : First, in the use of glosses or foreign language ; and secondly, in that of certain irreg-

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xxv. xxxiv. xxxvii. cxi. cxii. cxix. cxlv. Prov. xxxi. from the 10th verse to the end. The whole of the Lamentations of Jeremiah except the last chapter.



ular or less received forms of common words.<sup>2</sup> The extreme liberty which the Greeks allowed themselves in these respects, is remarkable ; and their language, beyond every other, because of the variety and copiousness of the different dialects, which prevailed in the several states of Greece, was peculiarly favourable to it. Next to them none perhaps have admitted these liberties more freely than the Hebrews, who not only by the use of glosses, but by that of anomalous language, and chiefly of certain particles peculiar to metrical composition, and added frequently at the end of words, have so varied their style, as to form to themselves a distinct poetical dialect. Thus far, therefore, I think we may with safety affirm, that the Hebrew poetry is metrical. (A) One or two of the peculiarities also of their versification it may be proper to remark, which, as they are very observable in those poems, in which the verses are defined by the initial letters, may at least be reasonably conjectured of the rest. The first of these is, that the verses are very unequal in length ; the shortest consisting of six or seven syllables ; the longest extending to about twice that number ; the same poem is, however, generally continued throughout in verses not very unequal to each other. I must also observe, that the close of the verse generally falls where the members of the sentences are divided.

As to the real quantity, the rhythm, or modulation, these from the present state of the language seem to be altogether unknown, and even to admit of no investigation by human art or industry. It is indeed evident, that the true Hebrew pronunciation is totally lost. The rules concerning it, which were devised by the modern Jews many ages after the language of their ancestors had fallen into disuse, have been long since suspected by the learned to be destitute of authority and truth : for if in reality the Hebrew language is to be conformed to the positions of these men, we must be under the necessity of confessing, not only, what we at present experience, that the Hebrew poetry possesses no remains of sweetness or harmony, but that it never was possessed of any. The truth is, it was neither possible for them to recal the true pronunciation of a language long since obsolete, and to institute afresh the rules of orthoepy ; nor can any person in the present age so much as hope to effect any thing to the purpose by the aid of conjecture, in a matter so remote from our senses, and so involved in obscurity. In this respect, indeed, the delicacy of all languages is most remarkable. After they cease to

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<sup>2</sup> See Aristot. Poet. 2.

be spoken, they are still significant of some sound ; but that in the mouth of a stranger becomes most dissonant and barbarous : the vital grace is wanting, the native sweetness is gone, the colour of primeval beauty is faded and decayed. The Greek and Latin doubtless have now lost much of their pristine and native sweetness ; and as they are spoken, the pronunciation is different in different nations, but every where barbarous, and such as Attic or Roman ears would not have been able to endure. In these, however, the rhythm or quantity remains, each retains its peculiar numbers, and the versification is distinct : but the state of the Hebrew is far more unfavourable, which, destitute of vowel sounds, has remained altogether silent (if I may use the expression) incapable of utterance upwards of two thousand years. Thus, not so much as the number of syllables, of which each word consisted, could with any certainty be defined, much less the length or quantity of the syllables : (B) and since the regulation of the metre of any language must depend upon two particulars, I mean the number and the length of the syllables, the knowledge of which is utterly unattainable in the Hebrew, he who attempts to restore the true and genuine Hebrew versification, erects an edifice without a foundation. To some of those indeed who have laboured in this matter, thus much of merit is to be allowed ; that they rendered the Hebrew poetry, which formerly sounded uncommonly harsh and barbarous, in some degree softer and more polished ; they indeed furnished it with a sort of versification, and metrical arrangement, when baffled in their attempts to discover the real. That we are justified in attributing to them any thing more than this, is neither apparent from the nature of the thing, nor from the arguments with which they attempt to defend their conjectures.<sup>3</sup> Their endeavours in truth would rather tend to supersede all inquiry on a subject which the most learned and ingenious have investigated in vain ; and induce us to relinquish as lost, what we see cannot be retrieved.

But although nothing certain can be defined concerning the metre of the particular verses, there is yet another artifice of poetry to be remarked of them when in a collective state, when several of them are taken together. In the Hebrew poetry, as I before remarked, there may be observed a certain conformation of the sentences, the nature of which is, that a complete sense is almost equally infused into every component part, and that every member constitutes an entire verse. So that as the poems divide themselves in a man-

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<sup>3</sup> See the brief confutation of Bishop Hare's Hebrew Metres.



ner spontaneously into periods, for the most part equal ; so the periods themselves are divided into verses, most commonly couplets, though frequently of greater length. This is chiefly observable in those passages, which frequently occur in the Hebrew poetry, in which they treat one subject in many different ways, and dwell upon the same sentiment ; when they express the same thing in different words, or different things in a similar form of words ; when equals refer to equals, and opposites to opposites : and since this artifice of composition seldom fails to produce even in prose an agreeable and measured cadence, we can scarcely doubt that it must have imparted to their poetry, were we masters of the versification, an exquisite degree of beauty and grace. In this circumstance, therefore, which is common to most of the Hebrew poems, we find, if not a rule and principle, at least a characteristic of the sacred poetry : insomuch that in that language the word מְזֻמָּר (or Psalm) according to its etymology, is expressive of a composition cut or divided, in a peculiar manner, into short and equal sentences. (c)

The nature of the Greek and Latin poetry is in this respect directly opposite ; and that in conformity to the genius of the different languages. For the Greek, beyond every other language, (and the Latin next to it) is copious, flowing and harmonious, possessed of a great variety of measures, of which the impression is so definite, the effects so striking, that if you should recite some lame and imperfect portion of a verse or even enunciate hastily several verses in a breath, the numbers would nevertheless be clearly discernible : so that in these every variety essential to poetry and verse may be provided for almost at pleasure, without the smallest injury to the different metres. But in the Hebrew language the whole economy is different. Its form is simple above every other ; the radical words are uniform, and resemble each other almost exactly ; nor are the inflexions numerous, or materially different : whence we may readily understand, that its metres are neither complex, nor capable of much variety ; but rather simple, grave, temperate ; less adapted to fluency than dignity and force : so that possibly they found it necessary to distinguish the extent of the verse by the conclusion of the sentence, lest the lines by running into each other, should become altogether implicated and confused. (d)

Two observations occur in this place worthy of attention, and arise naturally from what has been said. The first is, that a poem translated literally from the Hebrew into the prose of any other lan-



guage, while the same forms of the sentences remain, will still retain, even as far as relates to versification, much of its native dignity, and a faint appearance of versification.(E) This is evident in our common version of the Scriptures, where frequently

“*Invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ.*”

But the case is very different in literal translations from the Greek or Latin.<sup>4</sup> The other remark, which I wished to recommend to your notice, is, that a Hebrew poem, if translated into Greek or Latin verse, and having the conformation of the sentences accommodated to the idiom of a foreign language, will appear confused and mutilated ; will scarcely retain a trace of its genuine elegance, and peculiar beauty. For in exhibiting the works of great poets in another language, much depends upon preserving not only the internal meaning, the force and beauty as far as regards the sense, but even the external lineaments, the proper colour and habit, the movement, and, as it were, the gait of the original. Those, therefore, who have endeavoured to express the beauties of the sacred poets in Greek or Latin verse, have unavoidably failed in the attempt to depict them according to their native genius and character : and have exhibited something, whether inferior or not, certainly very unlike them, both in kind and form ; whether, on the other hand, they have been able to approach in some degree, their energy, their majesty and spirit, is not our present object to consider.

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<sup>4</sup> “Nevertheless” (that is, though the sacred poetry be not possessed of metrical syllables, and divided into feet, which is the opinion of this learned man) “we cannot doubt that it has another species of metrical arrangement, which depends upon the subject.—Is it not evident, that if you translate some of them into another language, they still retain this metrical form, if not perfect, at least in a great degree ? which cannot possibly take place in those poems, the metre of which consists in the number and quantity of syllables.” R. AZARIAS in Mantiss. Dissert. ad Libr. COSRI, p. 420.

## PART II.

OF THE PARABOLIC OR POETICAL STYLE OF THE HEBREWS.

משפ.

### LECTURE IV.

THE ORIGIN, USE, AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARABOLIC, AND  
ALSO OF THE SENTENTIOUS STYLE.

The poetic style of the Hebrews bears the general title of *parabolic*—Its constituent principles are the sententious, the figurative, and the sublime—The source of the parabolic style and its original use : among other nations ; among the Hebrews—Certain examples of it preserved from the first ages in the writings of Moses.—1. The sententious kind ; its nature and effects.

THE subject which next presents itself to our investigation, is the style of the Hebrew poetry. The meaning of this word I do not wish to be restricted to the diction only of the sacred poets, but rather to include their sentiment, their mode of thinking ; whence, as from its genuine source, the peculiar character of their composition may be deduced. It will be proper, however, before we proceed, to remark, that as it is the nature of all poetry, so it is particularly of the Hebrew, to be totally different from common language ; and not only in the choice of words, but in the construction, to affect a peculiar and more exquisite mode of expression. The truth of this remark will appear from what usually happens to a learner of Hebrew. He, for instance, who is a proficient in the historical books, when he comes to the poetical parts, will find himself almost a perfect stranger. The phraseology, however, peculiar to the poets, the bold ellipses, the sudden transitions of the tenses, genders, and persons, and other similar circumstances, I shall leave to the grammarian : or rather I shall leave (since I do not find that the grammarians acknowledge any distinction between poetical and common language) to be collected from practice and attentive reading. It would be a no less indolent and trifling occupation to post through all those forms of tropes and figures, which the teachers of rhetoric have pompously (not to say uselessly) heaped together ; since there is no



necessity of applying to the sacred poetry for examples of these, every composition, however trite and barren, abounding in them. Of these, therefore, we shall be sparing, and use them not as freely as we might, but as much only as shall appear absolutely necessary. For at present we are not so much to inquire what are the general principles of poetical composition, as what are the peculiar marks and characters of the Hebrew poetry. Let us consider, therefore, whether the literature of the Hebrews will not suggest some general term, which will give us an opportunity of discussing the subject, so as to bring it under one comprehensive view; and which, being divided according to its constituent parts, will prescribe a proper order and limit to our disquisition.

A poem is called in Hebrew מְזֻמָּן, that is, as was before remarked, a short composition cut and divided into distinct parts. It is thus called in reference to the verse and numbers. Again, a poem is called, in reference to the diction and sentiments, מְשֻׁבָּח;<sup>1</sup> which I take to be the word properly expressive of the poetical style. Many translators render it by the word *parable*, which in some respects is not improper, though it scarcely comprehends the full compass of the Hebrew expression; for if we investigate its full and proper force, we shall find that it includes three forms or modes of speech, the sententious, the figurative, and the sublime. (A) To these as parts or divisions of the general subject, may be referred whatever occurs concerning the parabolical or poetical style of the Hebrews: but the reason of this arrangement will perhaps be better understood, if we premise a short inquiry into the origin and early use of this style of composition.

The origin and first use of poetical language are undoubtedly to be traced into the vehement affections of the mind. For what is meant by that singular frenzy of poets, which the Greeks, ascribing to divine inspiration, distinguished by the appellation of *enthusiasm*, but a style and expression directly prompted by nature itself, and exhibiting the true and express image of a mind violently agitated? When, as it were, the secret avenues, the interior recesses of the soul are thrown open; when the inmost conceptions are displayed, rushing together in one turbid stream, without order or connexion. Hence sudden exclamations, frequent interrogations, apostrophes even to inanimate objects: for to those, who are violently agitated

<sup>1</sup> NUMB. xxi. 27. xxiii. and xxiv. frequently. MIC. ii. 4. ISAI. xiv. 4. PSAL. xlix. 5. lxxviii. 2. JOB xxvii. 1. xxix. 1.

themselves, the universal nature of things seems under a necessity of being affected with similar emotions. Every impulse of the mind, however, has not only a peculiar style and expression, but a certain tone of voice and a certain gesture of the body adapted to it : some indeed, not satisfied with that expression which language affords, have added to it dancing and song ; and as we know there existed in the first ages a very strict connexion between these arts and that of poetry, we may possibly be indebted to them for the accurately ad-measured verses and feet, to the end that the modulation of the language might accord with the music of the voice, and the motion of the body. (B)

Poetry, in this its rude origin and commencement, being derived from nature, was in time improved by art, and applied to the purposes of utility and delight. For as it owed its birth to the affections of the mind, and had availed itself of the assistance of harmony, it was found, on account of the exact and vivid delineation of the objects which it described, to be excellently adapted to the exciting of every internal emotion, and making a more forcible impression upon the mind than abstract reasoning could possibly effect ; it was found capable of interesting and affecting the senses and passions, of captivating the ear, of directing the perception to the minutest circumstances, and of assisting the memory in the retention of them. Whatever therefore deserved to be generally known and accurately remembered, was (by those men, who on this very account were denominated *wise*) (C) adorned with a jocund and captivating style, illuminated with the varied and splendid colouring of language, and moulded into sentences comprehensive, pointed and harmonious. It became the peculiar province of poetry to depict the great, the beautiful, the becoming, the virtuous ; to embellish and recommend the precepts of religion and virtue, to transmit to posterity excellent and sublime actions and sayings ; to celebrate the works of the Deity, his beneficence, his wisdom ; to record the memorials of the past, and the predictions of the future. In each of these departments poetry was of singular utility, since before any characters expressive of sounds were invented, at least before they were commonly received, and applied to general use, it seems to have afforded the only means of preserving the rude science of the early times ; and in this respect, to have rendered the want of letters more tolerable : it seems also to have acted the part of a public herald, by whose voice each memorable transaction of antiquity was proclaimed, and transmitted through different ages and nations.



Such appears by the testimony of authors to have been the undoubted origin of poetry among heathen nations. It is evident that Greece for several successive ages was possessed of no records but the poetic: for the first who published a prose oration, was Pherecydes, a man of the isle of Syrus, and contemporary with king Cyrus, who lived some ages posterior to that of Homer and Hesiod: somewhat after that time, Cadmus the Milesian began to compose history. The laws themselves were metrical, and adapted to certain musical notes: such were the laws of Charondas, which were sung at the banquets of the Athenians: such were those which were delivered by the Cretans to the ingenuous youth to be learned by rote, with accompaniments of musical melody, in order that by the enchantment of harmony, the sentiments might be more forcibly impressed upon their memories. Hence certain poems were denominated *ρομοι*, which implied convivial or banqueting songs, as is remarked by Aristotle; who adds, that the same custom of chanting the laws to music, existed even in his own time among the Agathyrsi. If we may credit Strabo, the Turdetani, a people of Spain, had laws in verse. But the Germans, as Tacitus positively asserts, had no records or annals but the traditional poems, in which they celebrated the heroic exploits of their ancestors. In the same manner, and on the same account, the Persians, the Arabs, and many of the most ancient of the Eastern nations, preserved in verse their history and politics, as well as the principles of religion and morals: Thus all science human and divine was deposited in the treasury of the Muses, and thither it was necessary on every occasion to resort. The only mode of instruction, indeed, adapted to human nature in an uncivilized state, when the knowledge of letters was very little, if at all, diffused, must be that which is calculated to captivate the ear and the passions, which assists the memory, which is not to be delivered into the hand, but infused into the mind and heart. (n)<sup>2</sup>

That the case was the same among the Hebrews; that poetry was both anciently and generally known and practised by them, appears highly probable, as well from the analogy of things, as from some vestiges of poetic language extant in the writings of Moses. The first instance occurs in one of the most remote periods of the

<sup>2</sup> Compare Strabo, Geog. Lib. I. and III. Pliny, Nat. Hist. Lib. VII. 56. V. 29. Isidor. Hispal. Orig. Lib. I. 27. Athenaeus, Lib. XIV. 3. Aelian, Var. Hist. Lib. II. 39. Aristotle, Prob. XIX. 2. 28. Tacitus, Germ. II. Chardin's Travels, Vol. II. c. XIV. Pococke, Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 158.



Mosaic history, I mean the address of Lamech to his wives, which is indeed but ill understood in general, because the occasion of it is very obscurely intimated : nevertheless, if we consider the apt construction of the words; the exact distribution of the period into three distichs, and the two parallel, and as it were corresponding sentiments in each distich ; I apprehend it will easily be acknowledged as an indubitable specimen of the poetry of the first ages :

" Hadah et Sillah, audite vocem meam ;  
 " Uxores Lamechi, auscultate eloquium meum :  
 " Quod virum occidi in vulnus meum,  
 " Et puerum in livorem meum :  
 " Quia septemplex vindicabitur Cain,  
 " Et Lamech septuagesies septies."<sup>3</sup>

Another example, which I shall point out to you, appears no less to bear the genuine marks of poetry than the former, and that is the execration of Noah upon Ham ; with the magnificent predictions of prosperity to his two brothers, to Shem in particular, and the ardent breathings of his soul for their future happiness : these are expressed in three equal divisions of verses, concluding with an indignant repetition of one of the preceding lines :

" Maledictus Chanaan !  
 " Servus servorum erit fratribus suis.  
 " Benedictus Iehova Deus Shemi !  
 " Et sit Chanaan servus illis.  
 " Dilatet Deus Iaphetum,  
 " Et habitet in tentoriis Shemi ;  
 " Et sit Chanaan servus illis."<sup>4</sup>

The inspired benedictions of the patriarchs Isaac and Jacob are altogether of the same kind :<sup>5</sup> and the great importance of these prophecies, not only to the destiny of the people of Israel, but to that of the whole human race, renders it highly probable that they were extant in this form before the time of Moses ; and that they were afterwards committed to writing by the inspired historian, exactly as he had received them from his ancestors, without presuming to bestow on these sacred oracles any adventitious ornaments or poetical colouring.

The matter will appear yet clearer, if we advert to some other verses, a little different in kind, to which the same historian appeals (as well known and popular) in testimony of the truth of his narration. Thus, when he relates the first incursion of the Israelites in-

<sup>3</sup> Gen. iv. 23, 24.<sup>4</sup> Gen. ix. 25, 27.<sup>5</sup> Gen. xxvii. 27, 29, 39, 40. xlix.

to the country of the Amorites, in order to mark more precisely the boundaries of that state, and to explain more satisfactorily the nature of the victories not long before achieved over the Moabites, he cites two fragments of poems; the one from the book of the wars of Jehovah,<sup>6</sup> the other from the sayings (סִפְּרֵי) of those who spoke in parables; that is, as appears from the nature of things, from some panegyrical or triumphal poem of the Amorites. (ε) To which we may add, what immediately follow the prophecies of Balaam the Mesopotamian, pronounced also in the parabolic style, as appears from the extreme neatness of the composition, the metrical and parallel sentences, the sublimity of the language and sentiment, and the uncommon elegance of the verse. Hence it is easy to collect, that this kind of poetry, which appears perfectly analogous to all the rest of the Hebrew poetry that still remains, was neither originally the production of Moses, nor peculiar to the Jewish nation, but that it may be accounted among the first fruits of human ingenuity, and was cultivated by the Hebrews and other eastern nations from the first ages, as the recorder of events, the preceptor of morals, the historian of the past, and prophet of the future.<sup>7(r)</sup>

Concerning the utility of poetry, therefore, the Hebrews have maintained the same opinion throughout all ages. This being always accounted the highest commendation of science and erudition: "To understand a proverb and the interpretation; the words of the wise and their dark sayings;"<sup>8</sup> under which titles two species of poetry seem to be particularly indicated, different indeed in many respects, yet agreeing in some. The one I call *didactic*, which expresses some moral precept in elegant and pointed verses, often illustrated by a comparison either direct or implied; similar to the *γνώμαι* and adages of the wise men: the other was truly poetical, adorned with all the more splendid colouring of language, magnificently sublime in the sentiments, animated by the most pathetic expression, and diversified and embellished by figurative diction and poetical imagery; such are almost all the remaining productions of the prophets. Brevity or conciseness was a characteristic of each of these forms of composition, and a degree of obscurity was not unfre-

<sup>6</sup> Numb. xxi. 14, 15. 27—30.

<sup>7</sup> To the above examples from the books of Moses add the following: Gen. xxi. 6, 7. xxiv. 60. xxv. 23. xxviii. 16, 17. Observe also whether the answer of God, Numb. xii. 6—8, be not of the same kind.

<sup>8</sup> See Prov. i. 6. Wisd. viii. 8. Eccles. i. 25. vi. 35. xviii. 29. xxxix. 1, 2, 3.



quently attendant upon this studied brevity. Each consisted of metrical sentences; on which account chiefly the poetic and proverbial language seem to have obtained the same appellation; and in these two kinds of composition all knowledge human and divine was thought to be comprised.

The sententious style, therefore, I define to be the primary characteristic of the Hebrew poetry, as being the most conspicuous and comprehensive of all. For although that style seems naturally adapted only to the didactic, yet it is found to pervade the whole of the poetry of the Hebrews. There are indeed many passages in the sacred writings highly figurative, and infinitely sublime; but all of them manifestly assume a sententious form. There are some too, and those not inelegant, which possess little more of the characteristics of poetry than the versification, and that terseness or adaptation of the sentences, which constitutes so important a part even of the harmony of verse. This is manifest in most of the didactic psalms, as well as in some others, the matter, order, diction, and thoughts of which are clearly historical; but the conformation of the sentences wholly poetical. There is indeed so strict an analogy between the structure of the sentences and the versification, that when the former chances to be confused or obscured, it is scarcely possible to form a conjecture concerning the division of the lines or verses, which is almost the only part of the Hebrew versification that remains. It was therefore necessary, before I could explain the mechanism of the Hebrew verse, to remark many particulars which properly belong to the present topic.

The reason of this (not to detain you with what is obvious in almost every page of the sacred poetry) is as follows. The Hebrew poets frequently express a sentiment with the utmost brevity and simplicity, illustrated by no circumstances, adorned with no epithets (which in truth they seldom use;) they afterwards call in the aid of ornament; they repeat, they vary, they amplify the same sentiment; and adding one or more sentences which run parallel to each other, they express the same or a similar, and often a contrary sentiment in nearly the same form of words. Of these three modes of ornament at least they make the most frequent use, namely, the amplification of the same ideas, the accumulation of others, and the opposition or antithesis of such as are contrary to each other; they dispose the corresponding sentences in regular distichs adapted to each other, and of an equal length, in which, for the most part, things answer to

things, and words to words, as the son of Sirach says of the works of God, *two and two, one against the other*.<sup>9</sup> These forms again are diversified by notes of admiration, comparison, negation, and more particularly interrogation, whence a singular degree of force and elevation is frequently added to the composition.

Each language possesses a peculiar genius and character, on which depend the principles of the versification, and in a great measure the style or colour of the poetic diction. In Hebrew the frequent or rather perpetual splendour of the sentences, and the accurate recurrence of the clauses, seem absolutely necessary to distinguish the verse: so that what in any other language would appear a superfluous and tiresome repetition, in this cannot be omitted without injury to the poetry. This excellence, therefore, the sententious style possesses in the Hebrew poetry, that it necessarily prevents a prosaic mode of expression, and always reduces a composition to a kind of metrical form. For as Cicero remarks, "in certain forms of expression there exists such a degree of conciseness, that a sort of metrical arrangement follows of course. For when words or sentences directly correspond, or when contraries are opposed exactly to each other, or even when words of a similar sound run parallel, the composition will in general have a metrical cadence."<sup>10</sup> It possesses, however, great force in other respects, and produces several great and remarkable beauties of composition. For, as the sacred poems derive from this source a great part of their elegance, harmony, and splendour, so they are not unfrequently indebted to it for their sublimity and strength. Frequent and laconic sentences render the composition remarkably concise, harmonious, and animated; the brevity itself imparts to it additional strength, and being contracted within a narrower space, it has a more energetic and pointed effect.

Examples sufficient to evince the truth of these remarks will occur hereafter in the passages which will be quoted in illustration of other parts of our subject: and, in all probability, on a future occasion the nature of my undertaking will require a more ample discussion of this subject.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> ECCLUS. xxxiii. 15.

<sup>10</sup> Orator.

<sup>11</sup> See Lect. XIX.



## LECTURE V.

### OF THE FIGURATIVE STYLE, AND ITS DIVISIONS.

2. The Figurative Style; to be treated rather according to the genius of the Hebrew poetry than according to the forms and arrangements of rhetoricians.—The definition and constituent parts of the Figurative Style, Metaphor, Allegory, Comparison, Personification.—The reason of this mode of treating the subject: difficulties in reading the Hebrew poetry, which result from the Figurative Style; how to be avoided. 1. Of the Metaphor, including a general disquisition concerning poetic imagery: the nature of which is explained; and four principal sources pointed out: Nature, Common Life, Religion, History.

In my last lecture I offered it as my opinion, that the Hebrew word expressive of the poetic style had not one simple and distinct meaning, but might commodiously enough be supposed to admit of three constituent parts or divisions: in other words, that it might imply the *sententious*, the *figurative* and the *sublime*. On the sententious style, its nature, origin, and effect in the Hebrew poetry, I offered such brief remarks as occurred to me at the time: and now that I am about to treat of the figurative style, I observe before me an infinity of matter and an ample field; in which, lest we should too freely expatiate, or irregularly wander, the scope and order of our journey, the outlets of the road, the circuitous paths, and the most direct avenues, are in the first place to be carefully investigated. In order to the full comprehension also of those matters which will be treated of in this part, for they are in some degree remote from common use, it may not be improper previously to explain as clearly as possible, and therefore with some degree of copiousness, my immediate design; on what principles, in what order and method, and to what end I mean to treat of the figures which are chiefly employed in the Hebrew poetry.

The word הַשְׁוָה, in its most common acceptation, denotes resemblance, and is therefore directly expressive of the figurative style, as far as the nature of figures consists in the substitution of words, or rather of ideas, for those which they resemble; which is the case even with most of the figures that have been remarked by the rhetoricians. This definition therefore of the figurative style, drawn both from the writings of the Hebrews, and the sense of the word

itself, I mean to follow in explaining the nature of their poetry : and this I do the more willingly, because it will enable me to confine our investigation within narrower limits. I shall also venture to omit the almost innumerable forms of the Greek rhetoricians, who possessed the faculty of inventing names in the highest perfection ; I shall neglect even their primary distinction between tropes and figures,<sup>1</sup> and their subdivisions of the figures themselves, denominating some figures of expression, and some figures of sentiment. In disregarding these distinctions, I might in my own justification alledge the authority of C. Artorius Proculus, who gave the name of figure to a trope, as Quintilian informs us ; and indeed the example of Quintilian himself.<sup>2</sup> I omit them, however, upon a different ground ; for I do not pretend to say that in their proper place they are destitute either of reality or use ; but our present concern is not to explain the sentiments of the Greek but of the Hebrew writers. By figurative language, I would be understood to mean that, in which one or more images or words are substituted in the room of others, or even introduced by way of illustration upon the principle of resemblance. That resemblance, if it be only intimated, and confined to a few words, is called a *Metaphor* ; if the figure be continued, it is called an *Allegory* ; if it be directly expressed by comparing the ideas together, and by the insertion of any words expressive of likeness, it is called *Simile* or *Comparison*. On the same principle of resemblance the *Prosopopæia*, or Personification, is also founded, when a character and person is assigned even to things inanimate or fictitious (which is a bolder species of metaphor) or when a probable but fictitious speech is attributed to a real personage.(A)

I mean, therefore, to treat of these figures in the order just now proposed ; not as supposing them the only figures made use of by the Hebrew poets ; but in the first place, because they chiefly come within the definition of the parabolic style ; because too they most frequently occur in the sacred poetry, and constitute some of its greatest beauties : insomuch that their true force and energy is in no other composition so apparent. I must add, that it will not be

<sup>1</sup> This distinction is very judiciously laid aside, since each of these words is but a partial mode of expressing the same thing. A *trope* signifies no more than the *turning* a word from its appropriate meaning ; and a *figure*, an appearance incidentally assumed, without the least implication of its being borrowed.

Henley.

<sup>2</sup> See QUINT. Lib. IX. I.



sufficient to illustrate them barely by producing a few examples, as if matters uncommon and abstruse were the object of our inquiry, and not such as spontaneously occur on almost every occasion. It will be necessary to proceed still further if possible; it will be necessary to inquire whether there was any mode of using them peculiar to the Hebrews; the particular and interior elegancies of them are to be investigated; and to this object of our pursuit we shall not, I apprehend, find any easier access, than by that track, which the nature of the subject itself obviously indicates to us.

It is the peculiar design of the figurative style, taken in the sense in which I have explained it, to exhibit objects in a clearer or more striking, in a sublimer or more forcible manner. Since, therefore, whatever is employed with a view to the illustration and elevation of another subject, ought itself to be as familiar and obvious, at the same time as grand and magnificent as possible, it becomes necessary to adduce images from those objects, with which both the writers and the persons they address are well acquainted, and which have been constantly esteemed of the highest dignity and importance. On the other hand, if the reader be accustomed to habits of life totally different from those of the author, and be conversant only with different objects; in that case many descriptions and sentiments, which were clearly illustrated and magnificently expressed by the one, will appear to the other mean and obscure, harsh and unnatural: and this will be the case more or less, in proportion as they differ or are more remote from each other in time, situation, customs sacred or profane, in fine, in all the forms of public and private life. On this account difficulties must occur in the perusal of almost every work of literature, and particularly in poetry, where every thing is depicted and illustrated with the greatest variety and abundance of imagery; they must be still more numerous in such of the poets as are foreign and ancient; in the Orientals above all foreigners, they being the farthest removed from our customs and manners; and of all the Orientals more especially in the Hebrews, theirs being confessedly the most ancient compositions extant. To all who apply themselves to the study of their poetry, for the reasons which I have enumerated, difficulties and inconveniences must necessarily occur. Not only the antiquity of these writings forms a principal obstruction in many respects; but the manner of living, of speaking, of thinking, which prevailed in those times, will be found altogether different from our customs and habits. There is therefore great dan-

ger, lest viewing them from an improper situation, and rashly estimating all things by our own standard, we form an erroneous judgement.

Of this kind of mistake we are to be always aware, and these inconveniences are to be counteracted by all possible diligence : nor is it enough to be acquainted with the language of this people, their manners, discipline, rites and ceremonies : we must even investigate their inmost sentiments, the manner and connexion of their thoughts ; in one word, we must see all things with their eyes, estimate all things by their opinions : we must endeavour as much as possible to read Hebrew as the Hebrews would have read it. We must act as the astronomers with regard to that branch of their science which is called comparative, who in order to form a more perfect idea of the general system, and its different parts, conceive themselves as passing through, and surveying the whole universe, migrating from one planet to another, and becoming for a short time inhabitants of each. Thus they clearly contemplate, and accurately estimate what each possesses peculiar to itself with respect to situation, celerity, satellites, and its relation to the rest ; thus they distinguish what and how different an appearance of the universe is exhibited according to the different situations from which it is contemplated. In like manner, he who would perceive and feel the peculiar elegancies of the Hebrew poetry, must imagine himself exactly situated as the persons for whom it was written, or even as the writers themselves ; he must not attend to the ideas which on a cursory reading certain words would obtrude upon his mind ; he is to feel them as a Hebrew, hearing or delivering the same words at the same time, and in the same country. As far as he is able to pursue this plan, so far he will comprehend their force and excellence. This indeed in many cases it will not be easy to do ; in some it will be impossible ; in all, however, it ought to be regarded, and in those passages particularly in which the figurative style is found to prevail.

In the metaphor for instance (and what I remark concerning it may be applied to all the rest of the figures, since they are all naturally allied to each other) two circumstances are to be especially regarded, on which its whole force and elegance will depend : first, that resemblance which is the ground-work of the figurative and parabolic style, and which will perhaps be sufficiently apparent even from a common and indistinct knowledge of the objects ; and secondly, the beauty or dignity of the idea which is substituted for another ; and this is



a circumstance of unusual nicety. An opinion of grace and dignity results frequently, not so much from the objects themselves, in which these qualities are supposed to exist, as from the disposition of the spectator; or from some slight and obscure relation or connexion which they have with some other things. Thus it sometimes happens that the external form and lineaments may be sufficiently apparent, though the original and intrinsic beauty and elegance be totally erased by time.

For these reasons, it will perhaps not be an useless undertaking when we treat of the metaphors of the sacred poets, to enter more fully into the nature of their poetical imagery in general, of which the metaphor constitutes so principal a part. By this mode of proceeding, we shall be enabled not only to discern the general beauty and elegance of this figure in the Hebrew poetry, but the peculiar elegance, which it frequently possesses, if we only consider how forcible it must have appeared to those for whom it was originally intended; and what a connexion and agreement these figurative expressions must have had with their circumstances, feelings and opinions. Thus many expressions and allusions, which even now appear beautiful, must, when considered in this manner, shine with redoubled lustre; and many, which now strike the superficial reader as coarse, mean, or deformed, must appear graceful, elegant, and sublime.

The whole course of nature, this immense universe of things, offers itself to human contemplation, and affords an infinite variety, a confused assemblage, a wilderness, as it were, of images, which, being collected as the materials of poetry, are selected and produced as occasion dictates. The mind of man is that mirror of Plato,<sup>3</sup> which, as he turns about at pleasure, and directs to a different point of view, he creates another sun, other stars, planets, animals, and even another self. In this shadow or image of himself, which man beholds when the mirror is turned inward towards himself, he is enabled in some degree to contemplate the souls of other men: for, from what he feels and perceives in himself, he forms conjectures concerning others; and apprehends and describes the manners, affections, conceptions of others from his own. Of this assemblage of images, which the human mind collects from all nature, and even from itself, that is, from its own emotions and operations, the least

<sup>3</sup> De Rep. Lib. X. sub init.

clear and evident are those which are explored by reason and argument; the more evident and distinct are those which are formed from the impressions made by external objects on the senses; and of these, the clearest and most vivid are those which are perceived by the eye. Hence poetry abounds most in those images which are furnished by the senses, and chiefly those of the sight; in order to depict the obscure by the more manifest, the subtle by the more substantial; and, as far as simplicity is its object, it pursues those ideas which are most familiar and most evident; of which there is such an abundance, that they serve as well the purpose of ornament and variety as that of illustration.

Those images or pictures of external objects, which like lights adorn and distinguish the poetic diction, are indeed infinite in number. In an immensity of matter, however, that we may be enabled to pursue some kind of order, and not wander in uncertainty and doubt, we may venture to fix upon four sources of these ideas, whither all that occur may be commodiously referred. Thus, poetical imagery may be derived first, from natural objects; secondly, from the manners, arts, and circumstances of common life; thirdly, from things sacred; and lastly, from the more remarkable facts recorded in sacred history.(B) From each of these topics a few cases will be selected, and illustrated by examples, which though chiefly of the metaphorical kind, will yet be in a great measure applicable to the other figures which have been specified; these we shall afterwards take an opportunity to explain, when not only the figures themselves will be noticed, but also the different forms and rules for their introduction and embellishment.

## LECTURE VI.

### OF POETIC IMAGERY FROM THE OBJECTS OF NATURE.

The frequent use of the metaphor renders a style magnificent, but often obscure: the Hebrew poets have accomplished the sublime without losing perspicuity—Three causes assigned for this singular fact: first, the imagery which they introduce is in general derived from familiar objects: again, in the use and accommodation of it they pursue a certain custom and analogy: lastly, they make the most free use of that which is most familiar, and the nature and extent of which is most generally known—These observations confirmed by examples (1.) from natural objects: such as are common to mankind in general; such as are more familiar to the Hebrews than to others; and such as are peculiar to them.

“THE great excellence of the poetic dialect,” as Aristotle most judiciously remarks, “consists in perspicuity without meanness. Familiar terms and words in common use form a clear and perspicuous, but frequently a low style; unusual or foreign expressions give it an air of grandeur, but frequently render it obscure.”<sup>1</sup> Of those which he calls foreign, the principal force lies in the metaphor; but “as the temperate and reasonable use of this figure enlivens a composition, so the frequent introduction of metaphors obscures it; and if they very commonly occur, it will be little better than an enigma.”<sup>2</sup> If the Hebrew poets be examined by the rules and precepts of this great philosopher and critic, it will readily be allowed, that they have assiduously attended to the sublimity of their compositions by the abundance and splendour of their figures; though it may be doubted whether they might not have been more temperate in the use of them. For in those poems at least, in which something of uncommon grandeur and sublimity is aimed at, there predominates a perpetual, I had almost said a continued use of the metaphor, sometimes daringly introduced, sometimes rushing in with imminent hazard of propriety. A metaphor thus licentiously intruded, is frequently continued to an immoderate extent. The Orientals are attached to this style of composition; and many flights which our ears, too fastidious perhaps in these respects, will scarcely bear, must be allowed to the general freedom and boldness of these writers. But if we examine the sacred poems, and consider at the same time that a great degree of obscurity must result from the to-

<sup>1</sup> Poet. c. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. et QUINT. viii. 6.

tal oblivion in which many sources of their imagery must be involved; of which many examples are to be found in the Song of Solomon, as well as in other parts of the sacred writings; we shall, I think, find cause to wonder that in writings of so great antiquity, and in such an unlimited use of figurative expression, there should yet appear so much purity and perspicuity, both in sentiment and language. (A) In order to explore the real cause of this remarkable fact, and to explain more accurately the genius of the parabolic style, I shall premise a few observations concerning the use of the metaphor in the Hebrew poetry; which I trust will be sufficiently clear to those who peruse it with attention, and which I think in general are founded in truth.

In the first place, the Hebrew poets frequently make use of imagery borrowed from common life, and from objects well known and familiar. On this the perspicuity of figurative language will be found in a great measure to depend. For a principal use of metaphors is to illustrate the subject by a tacit comparison; but if, instead of familiar ideas, we introduce such as are new, and not perfectly understood; if we endeavour to demonstrate what is plain by what is occult, instead of making a subject clearer, we render it more perplexed and difficult. To obviate this inconvenience, we must take care, not only to avoid the violent and too frequent use of metaphors, but also not to introduce such as are obscure and but slightly related. From these causes, and especially from the latter, arises the difficulty of the Latin satirist Persius; and but for the uncommon accuracy of the sacred poets in this respect, we should now be scarcely able to comprehend a single word of their productions.

In the next place, the Hebrews not only deduce their metaphors from familiar, or well known objects, but preserve one constant track and manner in the use and accommodation of them to their subject. The parabolic may indeed be accounted a peculiar style, in which things moral, political, and divine, are marked and represented by comparisons implied or expressed, and adopted from sensible objects. As in common and plain language, therefore, certain words serve for signs of certain ideas; so, for the most part, in the parabolic style, certain natural images serve to illustrate certain ideas more abstruse and refined. This assertion indeed is not to be understood absolutely without exception; but thus far at least we may affirm, that the sacred poets in illustrating the same subject, make a much more constant use of the same imagery than other poets are accus-



tomed to: and this practice has a surprising effect in preserving perspicuity.

I must observe in the last place, that the Hebrews employ more freely and more daringly that imagery in particular, which is borrowed from the most obvious and familiar objects, and the figurative effect of which is established and defined by general and constant use. This, as it renders a composition clear and luminous even where there is the greatest danger of obscurity; so it shelters effectually the sacred poets from the imputation of exuberance, harshness, or bombast.

In order to confirm and illustrate by examples what has been briefly set forth in the preceding remarks, I shall proceed to consider a few instances of metaphors derived from natural objects,<sup>(B)</sup> and such as are most in use: This I shall do in such a manner, that whatever observations occur upon one or two of them, may be applied to many other instances.

The images of *light* and *darkness* are commonly made use of in all languages to imply or denote prosperity and adversity, agreeably to the common sense and perception which all men have of the objects themselves. But the Hebrews employ those metaphors more frequently, and with less variation than other people; indeed they seldom refrain from them whenever the subject requires, or will even admit of their introduction. These expressions, therefore, may be accounted among those forms of speech, which in the parabolic style are established and defined; since they exhibit the most noted and familiar images, and the application of them on this occasion is justified by an acknowledged analogy, and approved by constant and unvarying custom. In the use of images, so conspicuous and so familiar among the Hebrews, a degree of boldness is excusable. The Latins introduce them more sparingly, and therefore are more cautious in the application of them:

“*Lucem redde tuæ, Dux bone, patriæ:*

“*Instar veris enim vultus ubi tuus*

“*Affulsit populo, gratior it dies,*

“*Et soles melius nitent.*”<sup>3</sup>

The most respectable of the Roman muses have scarcely any thing mere elegant, I will add at the same time, that they have scarcely any thing bolder on any similar occasion. But the Hebrews, upon a subject more sublime indeed in itself, and illustrating it by an idea

<sup>3</sup> Hor. Carm. iv. 5.

which was more habitual to them, more daringly exalt their strains, and give a loose rein to the spirit of poetry. They display, for instance, not the image of the spring, of Aurora, of the dreary night, but the sun and stars as rising with increased splendour in a new creation, or again involved in chaos and primeval darkness. Does the sacred bard promise to his people a renewal of the divine favour, and a recommencement of universal prosperity? In what magnificent colours does he depict it! such indeed as no translation can illustrate, but such as none can obscure:

"Erit lux lunae instar solis meridiani;  
"Erunt solares radii semtemplices."<sup>4</sup>

But even this is not sufficient.

"Non diurna solis luce uteris amplius;  
"Neque ad illustrandam noctem luna tibi illucebit:  
"Sed erit tibi Iehova aeterna lux;  
"Et gloria tibi erit Deus tuus.  
"Non occidet amplius sol tuus,  
"Nec luna tua sese retrahet;  
"Nam Iehova erit tibi aeterna lux,  
"Et dies moeroris tui desinent."<sup>5</sup>

In another place he has admirably diversified the same sentiment:

"Et pudebit lunam, et erubescet sol meridianus;  
"Cum regnat Iehova exercituum,  
"In monte Zione et in Hierosolymis,  
"Et coram senioribus suis gloriose."<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, denouncing ruin against the proud king of Egypt:

"Cum extingam te, obtegam coelos,  
"Et stellas eorum atrabo;  
"Solem nube involvam,  
"Nec splendorem suum emittet luna:  
"Omnia coeli lumina supra te obscurabo,  
"Terramque tuam tenebris operiam, edicit Dominus Iehova."<sup>7</sup>

These expressions are bold and daring: but the imagery is well known, the use of it is common, the signification definite; they are therefore perspicuous, clear, and truly magnificent.

There are, moreover, other images from natural objects, which although in some measure common to other nations as well as the Hebrews, are nevertheless, from the situation and nature of the country, much better known and more familiar to them. There is no

<sup>4</sup> ISAI. XXX. 26. <sup>5</sup> ISAI. LX. 19, 20. <sup>6</sup> ISAI. XXIV. 23. <sup>7</sup> EZEK. XXXII. 7, 8.

metaphor more frequent in the sacred poems, than that by which sudden and great calamities are expressed under the figure of a deluge of waters. This metaphor seems to have been remarkably familiar to the Hebrews, as if directly taken from the nature and state of the country. The river Jordan was immediately before their eyes, which annually overflowed its banks; for the snows of Lebanon and the neighbouring mountains being melted in the beginning of the summer, the waters of the river were often suddenly augmented by the torrents which burst forth from them. The whole country of Palestine indeed was watered by very few perennial currents; but being chiefly mountainous, was exposed to frequent floods, rushing violently along the valleys and narrow passages, after great tempests of rain, which periodically took place at certain seasons: and on this account Moses himself commends to the Israelites the country which they were about to invade, as being totally different from every thing they had experienced in Egypt, or in the desert of Arabia.<sup>8</sup> This image, therefore, though known to all poets and adopted by most, may be accounted peculiarly familiar, local in a manner to the Hebrews, and of consequence we cannot wonder at its frequent introduction into their compositions. The prophet seems to have depicted the face of nature exactly as it appeared to him, and to have adapted it to the figurative description of his own situation, when from the banks of Jordan, and the mountains at the head of that river, he pours forth the tempestuous violence of his sorrow with a force of language and an energy of expression, which has been seldom equalled:

"Abyssus abyssum inclamat, circumsonantibus tuis cataractis;

"Fluctus tui omnes undaeque me obruerunt."<sup>9</sup>

It may not be improper to remark in this place, that though this metaphor is so usual in all the other sacred writers, whenever an occasion presents itself of introducing it, the author of Job, in the whole of that poem, which from the nature of the subject presented excellent opportunities of employing it, has not more than twice, and then but slightly, made the least allusion to it.<sup>10</sup> Nature, indeed, presented a different aspect to the author, whoever he was, of that most noble poem, if, as many learned men conjecture, it was composed in some part of Arabia, for which, I confess, there is great ap-

<sup>8</sup> See SANDYS' Travels, B. III. DEUT. viii. 7. xi. 10, 11. JOSH. iii. 15. 1 CHRON. xii. 15. ECCLES. xxiv. 26.

<sup>9</sup> PSAL. xcii. 8.

<sup>10</sup> See JOB xxii. 11. xxvii. 20.



pearance of argument, from that famous simile, in which he compares his friends with the perfidious brook ;<sup>11</sup> a comparison manifestly taken from the rocky parts of Arabia, and adorned by many images proper to that region.

Finally, there is a species of imagery derived also from natural objects, altogether peculiar to the Hebrews. Among the mountains of Palestine, the most remarkable, and consequently the most celebrated in the sacred poetry, are mount Lebanon and mount Carmel. The one, remarkable as well for its height as for its extent, magnitude, and the abundance of the cedars which adorned its summit, exhibiting a striking and substantial appearance of strength and majesty. The other, rich and fruitful, abounding with vines, olives, and delicious fruits, in a most flourishing state both by nature and cultivation, and displaying a delightful appearance of fertility, beauty, and grace. The different form and aspect of these two mountains is most accurately defined by Solomon, when he compares the manly dignity with Lebanon, and the beauty and delicacy of the female with Carmel.<sup>12</sup> Each of them suggests a different general image, which the Hebrew poets adopt for different purposes, expressing that by a metaphor, which more timid writers would delineate by a direct comparison. Thus Lebanon is used, by a very bold figure, for the whole people of the Jews, or for the state of the church ; for Jerusalem ; for the temple of Jerusalem ; for the king of Assyria even, and for his army ; for whatever, in a word, is remarkable, august, and sublime : and in the same manner whatever possesses much fertility, wealth, or beauty, is called Carmel. Thus too, by the fat rams, heifers, and bulls of Basan, by the wild beast of the reeds, or lion of Jordan, are denoted the insolent and cruel tyrants of the Gentiles.<sup>13</sup> In this and other imagery of the same kind, though the sacred writers presume to attempt what would not be allowed in the Greek and Latin poets, yet they cannot be accused of any deficiency in perspicuity or elegance, especially if it be remembered that the objects which furnished them with this imagery were all familiar, or, if I may be allowed the expression, indigenous to the Hebrews.(c)

In a word, we may generally remark upon this head, that all poetry, and particularly that of the Hebrews, deduces its principal or-

<sup>11</sup> JOB vi. 15—20.

<sup>12</sup> CANT. v. 15. vii. 5.

<sup>13</sup> ISAI. xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2. ISAI. xxxvii. 24. JER. xxii. 6, 23. ZECH. xi. 1. ISAI. x. 34. ISAI. xi. 13. EZEK. xxxi. xvii. 3. ISAI. x. 18. MIC. vii. 14. JER. iv. 26. PSAL. xxii. 13. EZEK. xxxix. 18. AMOS iv. 1. PS. lxxviii. 31.



naments or imagery from natural objects : and since these images are formed in the mind of each writer, and expressed conformably to what occurs to his senses, it cannot otherwise happen, but, that through diversity of situation, some will be more familiar, some almost peculiar to certain nations ; and even those which seem most general, will always have some latent connexion with their immediate origin, and with their native soil. It is the first duty of a critic, therefore, to remark, as far as is possible, the situation and habits of the author, the natural history of his country, and the scene of the poem. Unless we continually attend to these points, we shall scarcely be able to judge with any degree of certainty concerning the elegance or propriety of the sentiments : the plainest will sometimes escape our observation ; the peculiar and interior excellencies will remain totally concealed.(v)

## LECTURE VII.

### OF POETIC IMAGERY FROM COMMON LIFE.

Examples of poetic imagery from common life—The habits of life extremely simple among the Hebrews, whose principal employments were agriculture and pasturage—The dignity of these employments; and the splendour of the imagery which is borrowed from them: *Threshing*, and the threshing instruments—The sublimity of the imagery which is taken from familiar objects, results from its propriety. The poetic hell of the Hebrews explained; the imagery of which is borrowed from their subterraneous sepulchres and funeral rites.

In my last Lecture I explained three causes, which have enabled the Hebrew poets to preserve in their figurative style the most perfect union between perspicuity and sublimity. I remarked in the first place, that they chiefly employed images taken from familiar objects, such I mean as were generally known and understood; secondly, that in the use or application of them, they observed a regular track, method, or analogy; and lastly, that they used most freely that kind of imagery which was most familiar, and the application of which was most generally understood. The truth of these observations will I think find further and more decisive confirmation, if those metaphors be considered, which are taken from arts, manners, and common life. These, you will easily recollect, I before pointed out as another source of poetical imagery: and for this part of the subject a few general observations will suffice, with an example or two out of the great number which present themselves in the sacred writings. The whole course and method of common or domestic life among the Hebrews of the more ancient times, was simple and uniform in the greatest degree. There existed not that variety of studies and pursuits, of arts, conditions, and employments, which may be observed among other nations, who boast of superior civilization; and rightly, indeed, if luxury, levity, and pride, be the criterions of it. All enjoyed the same equal liberty; all of them, as being the offspring of the same ancient stock, boasted an equality of lineage and rank; there were no empty titles, no ensigns of false glory; scarcely any distinction or precedence but that which resulted from superior virtue or conduct, from the dignity of age and experience, or from services rendered to their country. Separated from the rest of

mankind by their religion and laws, and not at all addicted to commerce, they were contented with those arts, which were necessary to a simple and uncultivated (or rather uncorrupted) state of life. Thus their principal employments were agriculture and the care of cattle; they were a nation of husbandmen and shepherds. The lands had been originally parcelled out to the different families; the portions of which (by the laws of the country) could not be alienated by sale,<sup>1</sup> and therefore descended to their posterity without diminution. The fruits of the earth, the produce of his land and labour, constituted the wealth of each individual. Not even the greatest among them esteemed it mean and disgraceful to be employed in the lowest offices of rural labour. In the Scripture history, therefore, we read of eminent persons called to the highest and most sacred offices, heroes, kings, and prophets, from the plough and from the stalls.<sup>2</sup>

Such being the state of things, we cannot reasonably be surprised to find the Hebrew writers deducing most of their metaphors from those arts particularly, in which they were educated from their earliest years. We are not to wonder that those objects which were most familiar to their senses, afforded the principal ornaments of their poetry; especially since they furnished so various and so elegant an assortment of materials, that not only the beautiful, but the grand and magnificent might be collected from them. If any person of more nicety than judgement should esteem some of these rustic images groveling or vulgar, it may be of some use to him to be informed, that such an effect can only result from the ignorance of the critic, who, through the medium of his scanty information and peculiar prejudices, presumes to estimate matters of the most remote antiquity; it cannot reasonably be attributed as an error to the sacred poets, who not only give to those ideas all their natural force and dignity, but frequently by the vivacity and boldness of the figure, exhibit them with additional vigour, ornament, and beauty.

It would be a tedious task to instance particularly with what embellishments of diction, derived from one low and trivial object, (as it may appear to some) the barn, or the threshing-floor, the sacred writers have contrived to add a lustre to the most sublime, and a force to the most important subjects: Thus "JEHOVAH threshes out the heathen as corn, tramples them under his feet, and disperses

<sup>1</sup> LEV. xxv. 13—16, and 23, 24. Compare 1 KINGS xxi. 3.

<sup>2</sup> See JUD. iii. 31. vi. 11. 1 SAM. ix. 3. xi. 5. 2 SAM. vii. 8. PSAL. lxxviii. 72, 73. 1 KINGS xix. 19, 20. AMOS i. 1. vii. 14, 15,



them. He delivers the nations to Israel to be beaten in pieces by an indented flail, or to be crushed by their brazen hoofs. He scatters his enemies like chaff upon the mountains, and disperses them with the whirlwind of his indignation."<sup>3</sup>

"Ecce feci te traham;

"Tribulum novum, instructum dentibus:

"Triturabis montes atque comminues,

"Et colles tanquam in glumam rediges:

"Ventilabis eos, ventusque auferet,

"Et turbo eos dissipabit."<sup>4</sup>

Of these quotations it is to be remarked, first, that the nature of this metaphor, and the mode of applying it, are constantly and cautiously regarded by the different authors of the sacred poems; and on this account, notwithstanding the boldness of it, both chastity and perspicuity are preserved: since they apply it solely to exaggerate the slaughter and dispersion of the wicked. The force and aptness of the image itself in illustrating the subject, will also afford a very proper and ready apology for some degree of freedom in the application of it, particularly if we advert to the nature and method of this rustic operation in Palestine. It was performed in a high situation exposed to the wind, by bruising the ear, either by driving in upon the sheaves a herd of cattle, or else by an instrument constructed of large planks, and sharpened underneath with stones or iron; and sometimes by a machine in the form of a cart, with iron wheels or axles indented, which Varro calls *Phanicum*,<sup>5</sup> as being brought to Italy by the Carthaginians from Phœnicia, which was adjacent to Palestine. From this it is plain (not to mention that the descriptions agree in every particular) that the same custom was common both to the Hebrews and the Romans; and yet I do not recollect that the latter have borrowed any of their poetical imagery from this occupation. It is proper, however, to remark, that this image was obvious and familiar to the Hebrews in a high degree, as we learn from what is said of the threshing-floor of Ornan<sup>6</sup> the Jebusite, which was situated in an open place (as were all the rest) in Jerusalem itself, and in the highest part of the city, in the very place, indeed, where the temple of Solomon was afterwards erected.

<sup>3</sup> HAB. iii. 12. JOEL iii. 14. JER. li. 33. ISAI. xxi. 10. MIC. iv. 13. PSALM lxxxiii. 14, 16. ISAI. xvii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> ISAI. xli. 15, 16.

<sup>5</sup> De Re Rust. 8. 52.

<sup>6</sup> 2 CHRON. iii. 1.



Homer, who was uncommonly fond of every picture of rural life, esteemed that under our consideration so beautiful and significant, that, in a few instances,<sup>7</sup> he draws his comparisons from the threshing-floor (for even he was fearful of the boldness of this image in the form of a metaphor.) Two of these comparisons he introduces to illustrate light subjects, contrary to the practice of the Hebrews; but the third is employed upon a subject truly magnificent, and this, as it approaches in some degree the sublimity of the Hebrew, it may not be improper to recite :

Ὡς δ' ὅτε τις λείψη βίας ἄρσενος ἐν οἰνοπέτρῃς,  
 Τριβίμεται κρή λευκὸν ἐντροχάλῳ ἐν ὁλώῃ,  
 Ῥιμφο τε λείπ' ἰγίνοντο βοῶν ἐπὶ πόσσ' ἰριμύκων·  
 Ὡς ἔπ' Ἀχιλλεύς μεγαθύμου μῶνυχες ἱπποὶ  
 Στυβὸν ὁμοῦ νικύς τε καὶ ὁπίσθας.<sup>8</sup>

This comparison, however, though deservedly accounted one of the grandest and most beautiful which antiquity has transmitted to us, still falls greatly short of the Hebrew boldness and sublimity. A Hebrew writer would have compared the hero himself with the instrument, and not his horses with the oxen that are harnessed to it, which is rather too apposite, and too exactly similar.<sup>9</sup> But custom had not given equal license to the Greek poetry; this image had not been equally familiar, had not occupied the same place as with the Hebrews; nor had acquired the same force and authority by long prescription.

I ought not in this place to omit that supremely magnificent delineation of the divine vengeance, expressed by imagery taken from the wine-press; an image which very frequently occurs in the sacred poets, but which no other poetry has presumed to introduce. But where shall we find expressions of equal dignity with the original in any modern language? By what art of the pencil can we exhibit even a shadow or an outline of that description, in which Isaiah depicts the Messiah as coming to vengeance?

—Ille patris vires indutus et iram,  
 Dira rubens graditur, per stragem et fracta potentum  
 Agmina, prona solo; prostratisque hostibus ultor  
 Insultat; ceu labra novo spumantia musto  
 Exercens, salit attritas calcator in uvas,  
 Congestamque struem subigit: caede atra recenti  
 Crura madent, rorantque inspersae sanguine vestes.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See Iliad v. 499 and xiii. 588.

<sup>8</sup> ILIAD, XX. 495.

<sup>9</sup> This will be more fully explained in Lect. XII.

<sup>10</sup> ISAIA. lxiii. 1—3.

But the instances are innumerable which might be quoted, of metaphors taken from the manners and customs of the Hebrews. One general remark, however, may be made upon this subject, namely, that from one simple, regular, and natural mode of life having prevailed among the Hebrews, it has arisen, that in their poetry these metaphors have less of obscurity, of meanness or depression, than could be expected, when we consider the antiquity of their writings, the distance of the scene, and the uncommon boldness and vivacity of their rhetoric. Indeed, to have made use of the boldest imagery with the most perfect perspicuity, and the most common and familiar with the greatest dignity, is a commendation almost peculiar to the sacred poets. I shall not hesitate to produce an example of this kind, in which the meanness of the image is fully equalled by the plainness and inelegance of the expression; and yet such is its consistency, such the propriety of its application, that I do not scruple to pronounce it sublime. The Almighty threatens the ultimate destruction of Jerusalem in these terms:

" Et detergam Hierosolymam,  
 " Ut deteraserit quispiam pateram;  
 " Detergit eam, pronam in faciem vertit."<sup>11</sup>

But many of these images must falsely appear mean and obscure to us, who differ so materially from the Hebrews in our manners and customs: but in such cases it is our duty neither too rashly to blame, nor too suddenly to despair. The mind should rather exert itself to discover, if possible, the connexion between the literal and the figurative meanings, which, in abstruse subjects, frequently depending upon some very delicate and nice relation, eludes our penetration. An obsolete custom, for instance, or some forgotten circumstance, opportunely adverted to, will sometimes restore its true perspicuity and credit to a very intricate passage. Whether the instance I have at present in view may prove of any utility or not in this respect, I will not presume to say; it may possibly, however, serve to illustrate still further the nature of the Hebrew imagery, and the accuracy of their poets in the application of it.

Either through choice or necessity, the infernal regions and the state of the dead has been a very common topic with the poets of every nation; and this difficult subject, which the most vigorous understanding is unable to fathom by any exertion of reason, and of which

<sup>11</sup> 2 KINGS xxi. 13. This is the answer of some prophet as related by the historian.



conjecture itself can scarcely form any adequate idea, they have ornamented with all the splendour of description, as one of the most important themes which could engage the human imagination. Thus the prompt and fertile genius of the Greeks, naturally adapted to the fabulous, has eagerly embraced the opportunity to indulge in all the wantonness of fiction, and has peopled the infernal regions with such a profusion of monsters, as could not fail to promote the ridicule even of the ignorant and the vulgar.<sup>12</sup> The conduct of the Hebrews has been very different; their fancy was restrained upon this subject by the tenets of their religion; and (notwithstanding the firm persuasion, of the existence not only of the soul, but of the body after death) we are to remember they were equally ignorant with the rest of mankind of the actual state and situation of the dead. In this case they have acted as in every other: what was plain and commonly understood concerning the dead, that is, what happened to the body, suggested the general imagery to which the Hebrews always resort in describing the state and condition of departed souls, and in forming what may be termed, if the expression be allowable, their poetical hell. It is called *SHEOL* by the Hebrews themselves, by the Greeks *HAIDES*, and by the Latins *INFERNUM*, or *SEPULCHRUM*. Into the funeral rites or ceremonies of the Hebrews may be traced all the imagery which their poets introduce to illustrate this subject; and it must be confessed that these afforded ample scope for poetical embellishment. The sepulchres of the Hebrews, at least those of respectable persons, and those which hereditarily belonged to the principal families, were extensive caves, or vaults, excavated from the native rock by art and manual labour.<sup>13</sup> The roofs of them in general were arched; and some were so spacious as to be supported by colonades. All round the sides were cells for the reception of the Sarcophagi; these were properly ornamented with sculpture, and each was placed in its proper cell. The cave or sepulchre admitted no light, being closed by a great stone, which was rolled to the mouth of the narrow passage or entrance. Many of these receptacles are still extant in Judea: two in particular are more magnificent than all the rest,<sup>14</sup> and are supposed to be the sepulchres of the

<sup>12</sup> See Cicero, *Quaest. Tusculan.* I. 5. 6.

<sup>13</sup> See *GEN.* xxiii. 9, 17. *2 KINGS* xiii. 21. *Is.* xxii. 16. *2 CHRON.* xvi. 14. *JOSH.* x. 27. *LAM.* iii. 53. *JOHN* xi. 33. and the Evangelists concerning the sepulchre of Christ.

<sup>14</sup> See a description of these Sepulchres, *SERLIO, Architectura*, L. iii. *VIL-TALPANDUS, Apparat. Urb.* iii. 16. *MAUNDREL's Travels* p. 76.

kings. One of these is in Jerusalem, and contains twenty-four cells; the other containing twice that number, is in a place without the city.(A)

If, therefore, we examine all those passages, in which the sacred writers have poetically described the infernal regions, we may, if I mistake not, clearly perceive them intent upon this gloomy picture, which their mode of sepulture presented to their view. That which struck their senses they delineated in their descriptions: we there find no exact account, no explicit mention of immortal spirits; not, according to the notion of some learned persons,<sup>15</sup> because they disbelieved in the existence of the soul after death, but because they had no clear idea or perception by which they might explain where or in what manner it existed; and they were not possessed of that subtilty of language, which enables men to speak with plausibility on subjects abstruse, and remote from the apprehension of the senses, and to cover their ignorance with learned disputation. The condition, the form, the habitation of departed spirits were therefore concealed from the Hebrews equally with the rest of mankind. Nor did revelation afford them the smallest assistance on this subject; not, perhaps, because the divine providence was disposed to withhold this information from them, but because the present condition of the human mind renders it incapable of receiving it. For when the understanding contemplates things distinct from body and matter, from the want of just ideas, it is compelled to have recourse to such as are false and fictitious, and to delineate the incorporeal world by things corporeal and terrestrial. Thus, observing that after death the body returned to the earth, and that it was deposited in a sepulchre, after the manner which has just been described, a sort of popular notion prevailed among the Hebrews, as well as among other nations, that the life which succeeded the present was to be passed beneath the earth: and to this notion even the sacred prophets were obliged to allude occasionally, if they wished to be understood by the people on this subject.(B)

Hence the meaning is evident, when the deceased are said to "descend into the pit, to the nether parts of the earth, to the gates and chambers of death, to the stony places, to the sides, to the gates of the caverns;" when it is said, "that the grave has swallowed

<sup>15</sup> See LE CLERC, Comment. Hagiographa: consult the index for the word *immortalitas*.



them up, and closed its mouth upon them ;" that " they lie down in the deep ; immersed in a desert place, in the gulf, in thick darkness, in the land of darkness and the shadow of death, wild, hideous, where all is disorder and darkness : and darkness, as it were, instead of light diffuseth its beams."<sup>16</sup>

The poets of other nations, amidst all their fictions, have yet retained a congenial picture of the habitations of the dead : Thus the tragic poet has admirably described the deep course of Acheron :

" Per speluncas saxis structas asperis, pendentibus,

" Maximis, ubi rigida constat crassa caligo inferum."<sup>17</sup>

But how grand and magnificent a scene is depicted by the Hebrew poets from the same materials, in which their deceased heroes and kings are seen to advance from the earth ! Figure to yourselves a vast, dreary, dark, sepulchral cavern, where the kings of the nations lie, each upon his bed of dust, the arms of each beside him, his sword under his head, and the graves of their numerous hosts round about them : Behold ! the king of Babylon is introduced ; they all rise and go forth to meet him ; and receive him as he approaches ! " Art thou also come down unto us ? Art thou become like unto us ! Art thou cut down and withered in thy strength, O thou destroyer of the nations !"<sup>18</sup>—But I reluctantly refrain.—It is not for me, nor indeed for human ability, to explain these subjects with a becoming dignity. You will see this transcendent imagery, yourselves, better and more completely displayed in that triumphal song, which was composed by Isaiah (the first of all poets for sublimity and elegance) previous to the death of the king of Babylon.<sup>19</sup> Ezekiel has also nobly illustrated the same scene, with similar machinery, in the last prophecy concerning the fall of Pharaoh ; that remarkable example of the terrific, which is indeed deservedly accounted the peculiar excellence of this prophet.<sup>20(c)</sup>

<sup>16</sup> שָׁחַת, also בּוֹר, or בְּאֵר, Job xxxiii. 18. Ps. xxviii. 1. et passim. אֶרֶץ שְׁחָרָיִת, or הַחֲתִיּוֹת, Ezek. xxxi. 14. xxxii. 18. et Ps. passim. שְׁעָרֵי שְׁאֵל, Is. xxxviii. 10. שְׁעָרֵי מָוֶת, Job xxxviii. 17. Ps. ix. 14. הַדְרֵי מָוֶת, Prov. vii. 27. אֲבֵנֵי בּוֹר, Isa. xiv. 19. יִרְשָׁתִי בּוֹר, Isa. xiv. 15. Ezek. xxxii. 23. בְּהֵי שְׁאֵל, Job. xvii. 16. פִּי שְׁאֵל, Ps. cxli. 7. פִּי בְּאֵר, Ps. lxix. 16. See also Isa. v. 14. מַצְוֵלָה, Ps. lxix. 16. lxxxviii. 7. הַרְבּוֹת, Job iii. 14. Ezek. xxvi. 20.

<sup>17</sup> Cic. Tusc. Quest. I.

<sup>18</sup> ISAI. xiv. 9, 18. EZEK. xxxii. 19, 21, &c. מִשְׁכָּב ISAI. lvii. 2. EZEK. xxxii. 25. הַתַּחֲמוֹת, the cell which receives the sarcophagus. EZEK. xxxii. 27. See 1 MACC. xiii. 29. EZEK. xxxii. 22, 23, 24.

<sup>19</sup> ISAI. xiv. 4—27.

<sup>20</sup> EZEK. xxxii. 18—32.

## LECTURE VIII.

### OF POETIC IMAGERY FROM SACRED TOPICS.

*Imagery which is borrowed from the rites and ceremonies of religion, peculiarly liable to obscurity and mistake—Instances of expressions, which appear uncommonly harsh; and of others, the principal elegance of which would be lost, unless we adverted to the nature of the sacred rites—The exordium of the hundred and fourth psalm explained.*

THE present disquisition concerning the poetical imagery of the Hebrews was undertaken, gentlemen, principally with a view of guarding you against an error, which is apt to mislead those who peruse without sufficient attention and information writings of so old a date; namely, that of accounting vulgar, mean, or obscure, passages which were probably accounted among the most perspicuous and sublime by the people to whom they were addressed. Now, if with respect even to that imagery, which is borrowed from objects of nature, and of common life, (of which we have just been treating) such a caution was proper, it will surely be still more necessary with respect to that which is borrowed from the sacred mysteries of religion. For though much of that imagery which was taken by the Hebrew writers from the general face of nature, or from the customs of common life, was peculiar to their own country, yet much, it must be confessed, was equally familiar to the rest of the world; but that, which was suggested by the rites and ceremonies of religion, was altogether peculiar to themselves, and was but little known beyond the limits of Judea. Since, therefore, this topic in particular seems to involve many such difficulties and inconveniences, it appears to me deserving of a serious investigation; and such investigation, I flatter myself, will tend to restore in some degree the real majesty of the Hebrew poetry, which seems to have shone forth in former times with no ordinary splendour.

The religion of the Hebrews embraced a very extensive circle of divine and human economy. It not only included all that regarded the worship of God; it extended even to the regulation of the commonwealth, the ratification of the laws, the forms and adminis-



tration of justice, and almost all the relations of civil and domestic life. With them almost every point of conduct was connected either directly or indirectly with their religion. Things which were held least in esteem by other nations, bore among them the sanction of divine authority, and had a very close alliance with both the more serious concerns of life and the sacred ceremonies. On these accounts it happens, in the first place, that abundance of metaphors occur in the Hebrew poetry deduced from sacred subjects; and further, that there is a necessity for the most diligent observation, lest that very connexion with the affairs of religion should escape us. For should we be mistaken in so material a point; should we erroneously account as common or profane what is in its nature divine; or should we rank among the mean and the vulgar, sentiments and images which are sacred and sublime; it is incredible how much the strength of the language, and the force and majesty of the ideas, will be destroyed. Nothing in nature, indeed, can be so conducive to the sublime, as those conceptions which are suggested by the contemplation of the greatest of all beings; and when the august form of Religion presents itself to the mental eye,

“ —quædam divina voluptas

“ Percipit, atque horror.”

It follows therefore of course, that the dignity of the Hebrew poetry must in some measure be diminished in our eyes, since not only the connexion of the imagery with sacred things must frequently escape our observation, but even when it is most apparent, it can scarcely strike us with that force and vivacity with which it must have penetrated the minds of the Hebrews. The whole system of the Hebrew rites is one great and complicated allegory, to the study and observance of which all possible diligence and attention were incessantly dedicated by those who were employed in the sacred offices. On this occupation and study, therefore, all good and considerate men were intent; it constituted all their business, all their amusement; it was their treasure and their hope; on this every care and every thought was employed; and the utmost sanctity and reverence distinguished every part of their conduct which had any relation to it. Much dignity and sublimity must also have resulted from the recollection, which these allusions produced, of the splendour and magnificence of the sacred rites themselves; the force of which upon the minds of those who had frequent opportunities of observing them, must have been incredible. Such a solemn grandeur attended these



rites, especially after the building of Solomon's temple, that although we are possessed of very accurate descriptions, our imaginations are still utterly unable to embody them. Many allusions, therefore, of this kind, which the Hebrew poets found particularly energetic, and highly popular among their countrymen, may possibly appear to us mean and contemptible; since many things which were held by them in the highest veneration, are by us but little regarded, or perhaps but little understood.

I shall subjoin a few examples of what I have just been remarking; or rather I shall point out a few topics, which will of themselves suggest a variety of examples.

Much of the Jewish law is employed in discriminating between things clean and unclean; in removing, and making atonement for things polluted or proscribed: and under these ceremonies, as under a veil or covering, a meaning the most important and sacred is concealed, as would be apparent from the nature of them, even if we had not, besides, other clear and explicit authority for this opinion. Among the rest are certain diseases and infirmities of the body, and some customs evidently in themselves indifferent: these, on a cursory view, seem light and trivial: but when the reasons of them are properly explored, they are found to be of considerable importance. We are not to wonder, therefore, if the sacred poets sometimes have recourse to these topics for imagery, even on the most momentous occasions, when they display the general depravity inherent in the human mind, or exprobrate the corrupt manners of their own people, or when they deplore the abject state of the virgin, the daughter of Sion, polluted and exposed.<sup>1</sup> If we consider these metaphors without any reference to the religion of their authors, they will doubtless appear in some degree disgusting and inelegant; if we refer them to their genuine source, to the peculiar rites of the Hebrews, they will be found wanting neither in force nor in dignity. Of the same nature, or at least analogous to them, are those ardent expressions of grief and misery, which are poured forth by the royal prophet (who, indeed, in many of those divine compositions personates a character far more exalted than his own;) especially when he complains, that he is wasted and consumed with the loathsomeness of disease, and bowed down and depressed with a burden of sin too heavy for human nature to sustain.<sup>2</sup> On reading these passages, some, who were but little ac-

<sup>1</sup> ISAI. lxi. 6. i. 5, 6, 16. EZEK. xxxvi. 17. LAM. i. 8, 9, 17. and ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See PSAL. xxxviii.

quainted with the genius of the Hebrew poetry, have pretended to inquire into the nature of the disease with which the poet was affected; not less absurdly, in my opinion, than if they had perplexed themselves to discover in what river he was plunged, when he complains that "the deep waters had gone over his soul."

But as there are many passages in the Hebrew poets, which may seem to require a similar defence, so there are in all probability many, which, although they now appear to abound in beauties and elegancies, would yet be thought much more sublime, were they illustrated from those sacred rites to which they allude; and, as excellent pictures, viewed in their proper light. To this purpose many instances may be produced from one topic, namely, from the precious and magnificent ornaments of the priest's attire. Such was the gracefulness, such the magnificence of the sacerdotal vestments, especially those of the high priest; so adapted were they, as Moses says,<sup>3</sup> to the expression of glory and of beauty, that to those, who were impressed with an equal opinion of the sanctity of the wearer, nothing could possibly appear more venerable and sublime. To these, therefore, we find frequent allusions in the Hebrew poets, when they have occasion to describe extraordinary beauty or comeliness, or to delineate the perfect form of supreme Majesty. The elegant Isaiah has a most beautiful idea of this kind, when he describes in his own peculiar manner (that is, most magnificently) the exultation and glory of the church, after its triumphal restoration. Pursuing the allusion, he decorates her with the vestments of salvation, and clothes her in the robe of righteousness. He afterwards compares the church to a bridegroom dressed for the marriage, to which comparison incredible dignity is added by the word *יְבוּנָה*, a metaphor plainly taken from the apparel of the priests, the force of which, therefore, no modern language can express.<sup>4</sup> No imagery, indeed, which the Hebrew writers could employ, was equally adapted with this to the display (as far as the human powers can conceive or depict the subject) of the infinite majesty of God. "JEHOVAH" is therefore introduced by the Psalmist, as "clothed with glory and with strength," he is girded with power;<sup>5</sup> which are the very terms appropriated to the describing of the dress and ornaments of the priests.(A)

Thus far may appear plain and indisputable; but, if I mistake not, there are other passages, the beauty of which lies still more re-

<sup>3</sup> EXOD. xxviii. 2. See ECCLUS. 1. 5—13.

<sup>4</sup> ISAI. lxi. 10.

<sup>5</sup> PSAL. lxxv. 7. xciii. 1.



mote from common observation. In that most perfect ode, which celebrates the immensity of the Omnipresent Deity, and the wisdom of the divine Artificer in forming the human body, the author uses a metaphor derived from the most subtle art of the Phrygian workman :

" Cum formatus essem in occulto,  
" Acupictus essem in penetralibus terrae."<sup>6</sup>

Whoever observes this, (in truth he will not be able to observe it in the common translations) and at the same time reflects upon the wonderful mechanism of the human body, the various implications of the veins, arteries, fibres, and membranes; the "indescribable texture" of the whole fabric; may, indeed, feel the beauty and gracefulness of this well-adapted metaphor, but will miss much of its force and sublimity, unless he be apprized that the art of designing in needlework was wholly dedicated to the use of the sanctuary, and, by a direct precept of the divine law, chiefly employed in furnishing a part of the sacerdotal habit, and the veils for the entrance of the tabernacle.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the poet compares the wisdom of the divine artificer with the most estimable of human arts, that art which was dignified by being consecrated altogether to the use of religion; and the workmanship of which was so exquisite, that even the sacred writings seem to attribute it to a supernatural guidance.<sup>8</sup>(B)

I will instance also another topic, which, if I am not deceived, will suggest several remarkable examples to this purpose. There is one of the Hebrew poems, which has been long since distinguished by universal approbation; the subject is the wisdom and design of the Creator in the formation of the universe: you will easily perceive that I have in view the hundred and fourth Psalm. The exordium is most sublime, and consists of a delineation of the divine majesty and power, as exemplified in the admirable constitution of nature. On this subject, since it is absolutely necessary to employ figurative language, the poet has introduced such metaphors as were accounted by the Hebrews the most magnificent and most worthy; for all of them are, in my opinion, borrowed from the tabernacle: but I find it will be necessary to quote the passage itself, and I shall endeavour to explain it as briefly as possible.

<sup>6</sup> PSALM CXXXIX. 15.

<sup>7</sup> EXOD. XXVIII. 39. XXVI. 36. XXVII. 16. Compare EZEK. XVI. 10, 13, 18.

<sup>8</sup> See EXOD. XXXV. 30—35.



The poet first expresses his sense of the greatness and power of the Deity in plain and familiar language; and then breaks out in metaphor:

"Thou art invested with majesty and glory:"

Where observe the word *שָׁבַב* (to *invest*) is the word always used to express the ceremony of putting on the sacerdotal ornaments.

"Covering thyself with light as with a garment:"

The light in the Holy of Holies, the manifest symbol of the divine presence, is figured under this idea; and this singular example is made use of figuratively to express the universal and ineffable glory of God.<sup>9</sup>

"Stretching out the heavens as a curtain:"

*כַּרְיִית* is the word made use of, and is the very name of those curtains with which the tabernacle was covered at the top and round about. The Seventy seem to have had this in view, when they render it *ὡς δερμα* (as a skin:) whence the vulgate *sicut pellem* (which is a literal translation of the Septuagint;) and another of the old translators *δεσμα* (a hide or skin.)<sup>10</sup>

"Laying the beams of his chambers in the waters:"

In these words the poet admirably expresses the nature of the air, which, from various and floating elements, is formed into one regular and uniform mass, by a metaphor drawn from the singular construction of the tabernacle: for it consisted of many different parts, which might be easily separated, but which were united by a curious and artful junction and adaptation to each other. He proceeds:

"Making the clouds his chariot;

"Walking upon the wings of the wind:"

He had before exhibited the divine Majesty under the appearance which it assumed in the Holy of Holies, that of a bright and dazzling light: he now describes it according to that which it assumed, when God accompanied the ark in the pillar of a cloud, which was carried along through the atmosphere. That vehicle of the divine presence is, indeed, distinguished in the sacred history by the particular appellation of a *chariot*.<sup>11</sup>

"Making the winds his messengers,

"And his ministers a flaming fire:"

<sup>9</sup> See EXOD. xl. 34—38. LEV. xvi. 2. NUMB. ix. 15, 16. 1 KINGS viii. 10, 11. 2 CHRON. vii. 1, 2. A similar allusion ISAI. iv. 5. IX. 2, 19. ZECH. ii. 5. Rev. xxi. 23.

<sup>10</sup> Compare EXOD. xxvi. 7, &c. with the SEPTUAGINT.

<sup>11</sup> 2 CHRON. xxviii. 18. See also ECCLES. xlix. 8.

The elements are described as prompt and ready in executing the commands of JEHOVAH, as angels, messengers, or ministers serving at the tabernacle, the Hebrew word being exactly expressive of the latter sense.

“ Who founded the earth upon its bases : ”

The following phrase also is directly taken from the same :

“ That it should not be displaced forever : ”

That is, “ for a certain period known only to the infinite wisdom of God.” As the situation of both was in this respect nearly the same, so, on the other hand, the permanence of the sanctuary is in other places compared, and in almost the same words, with the stability of the earth.<sup>12</sup>(c) (D)

Perhaps, in pursuing this investigation with so much subtilty and minuteness, I have scarcely acted consistently with the customs of this place, or the nature of my design : but it appeared absolutely necessary so to do, in order to make myself perfectly understood ; and to demonstrate, that it is scarcely or not at all possible for any translation fully to represent the genuine sense of the sacred poets, and that delicate connexion which for the most part exists between their poetical imagery, and the peculiar circumstances of their nation. This connexion frequently depends upon the use of certain terms, upon a certain association between words and things, which a translation generally perplexes, and very frequently destroys. This, therefore, is not to be preserved in the most literal and accurate version, much less in any poetical translation, or rather imitation : though there are extant some not unsuccessful attempts of this kind. To relish completely all the excellencies of the Hebrew literature, the fountains themselves must be approached, the peculiar flavour of which cannot be conveyed by aqueducts, or indeed by any exertion of modern art.(E)

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<sup>12</sup> PSAL. LXXVIII. 69.

## LECTURE IX.

### OF POETIC IMAGERY FROM THE SACRED HISTORY.

The imagery from the sacred history is the most luminous and evident of all—The peculiar nature of this kind of metaphor explained, as used by the Hebrew poets—The order of the topics which commonly furnish them : the Chaos and Creation ; the Deluge ; the destruction of Sodom ; the emigration of the Israelites from Egypt ; the descent of God upon mount Sinai—This species of metaphor excellently adapted to the sacred poetry, and particularly to the prophetic ; not easy to form any comparison between the sacred and profane poetry in this respect.

Four distinct classes of imagery having been specified as capable of being introduced in a metaphorical form into the poetry of the Hebrews, the last of these, or that which is suggested by the more remarkable transactions recorded in the sacred history, now remains to be examined. Here, however, since the nature of the subject differs in some degree from the former objects of our investigation, so the manner of treating it must be also different. The principal design of our late disquisition was, by considering the circumstances, customs, opinions, and sentiments of the Hebrews, to facilitate our approach to the interior beauties of their poetry ; and by duly examining the nature of the circumstances, to estimate more properly the force and power of each : to dispel as much as possible the mists of antiquity ; to restore their native perspicuity to such passages as appear obscure, their native agreeableness to such as now inspire us with sentiments of disgust, their proper allurements and elegance to those which seem harsh and vulgar, and their original dignity to those which the changeableness of custom has rendered contemptible or mean. In this division of our subject, on the contrary, but little will occur either difficult or obscure ; nothing which will seem to require explication or defence ; all will be at once perspicuous, splendid, and sublime. Sacred history illuminates this class of imagery with its proper light, and renders it scarcely less conspicuous to us than to the Hebrews themselves. There is, indeed, this difference, that to the Hebrews the objects of these allusions were all national and domestic ; and the power of them in moving or delighting the mind was of course proportionably greater ; nay, frequently, the very place, the scene of action, cer-



tain traces, and express tokens of so many miracles lying before their eyes, must have increased the effect. To us, on the other hand, however we may hold these facts in veneration, however great and striking they may be in themselves, the distance of time and place must of necessity render them less interesting.

The manner in which these metaphors are formed, is well deserving of observation, and is in fact as follows. In describing or embellishing illustrious actions, or future events of a miraculous nature, the Hebrew poets are accustomed to introduce allusions to the actions of former times, such as possess a conspicuous place in their history; and thus they illuminate with colours, foreign indeed, but similar, the future by the past, the recent by the antique, facts less known by others more generally understood: and as this property seems peculiar to the poetry of the Hebrews, at least is but seldom to be met with in that of other nations, I have determined to illustrate this part of my subject with a greater variety of examples than usual. I mean, therefore, to instance in a regular order certain topics or common-places of Scripture, which seem to have furnished, if not all, at least the principal part of these allusions: it will be necessary at the same time to remark their figurative power and effect, and the regular and uniform method pursued in the application of them, which has been already stated as characteristical of the poetical imagery of the Hebrews.

The first of these topics, or common-places, is the Chaos and the Creation, which compose the first pages of the sacred history. These are constantly alluded to, as expressive of any remarkable change, whether prosperous or adverse, in the public affairs; of the overthrow or restoration of kingdoms and nations: and are consequently very common in the prophetic poetry, particularly when any unusual degree of boldness is attempted. If the subject be the destruction of the Jewish empire by the Chaldeans, or a strong denunciation of ruin against the enemies of Israel, it is depicted in exactly the same colours, as if universal nature were about to relapse into the primeval chaos. Thus Jeremiah, in that sublime, and indeed more than poetical vision, in which is represented the impending desolation of Judea:

"Aspexi terram, ecce autem vacua est et informis;

"Et ad coelos, nec lucent amplius!

"Aspexi montes, ecce autem intremiscunt,

"Omnesque colles inter se raptim concutuntur!

"Aspexi, et ecce nullus est homo,

"Volucresque coeli omnes evanuerunt !  
 "Aspexi, et ecce Carmelum desertum,  
 "Et omnes eius urbes dirutas !  
 "A vultu Iehovae, ab aestu irae eius flagrantis."<sup>1</sup>

And on a similar subject Isaiah expresses himself with wonderful force and sublimity :

"Et extendet super eam lineam vastitatis et perpendiculum confusionis."<sup>2</sup>

Each of them not only had in his mind the Mosaic chaos, but actually uses the words of the divine historian. The same subjects are amplified and embellished by the prophets with several adjuncts :

"Nigrescent sol et luna ;  
 "Retrahentque splendorem suum stellae :  
 "Et ex Sione rugiet Iehova,  
 "Et ex Hierosolymis edet vocem ;  
 "Et commovebuntur coeli et tellus."<sup>3</sup>  
 "Et contabescet omnis coelorum exercitus ;  
 "Coeli etiam ipsi instar schedulae convolventur :  
 "Et omnis eorum exercitus decedet,  
 "Sicut cassa de vite folia,  
 "Utque marcida ex arbore sua ficus."<sup>4</sup>

On the contrary, when he foretels the restoration of the Israelites :

"At Ego Iehova sum Deus tuus,  
 "Qui subito tranquillat mare, cum fremunt fluctus eius ;  
 "Nomen illi Iehova exercituum :  
 "Indidi verba mea ori tuo,  
 "Et sub umbra manus meae te protexi :  
 "Ut plantem coelos, ut fundem terram,  
 "Utque dicam Sioni, meus tu es populus."<sup>5(a)</sup>  
 "Nam solatur Iehova Sionem,  
 "Solatur omnes eius vastitates :  
 "Et reddet deserta eius Edeni similia,  
 "Et solitudinem eius ut Paradisum Iehovae :  
 "Reperietur in ea laetitia et gaudium ;  
 "Gratiarum actio, et cantionum sonitus."<sup>6</sup>

In the former of these two last quoted examples, the universal deluge is exactly delineated, and on similar subjects the same imagery generally occurs. Thus, as the devastation of the holy land is frequent-

<sup>1</sup> JER. iv. 23—26.

<sup>2</sup> ISAI. xxxiv. 11.

<sup>3</sup> JOEL iii. 15, 16.

<sup>4</sup> ISAI. xxxiv. 4.

<sup>5</sup> ISAI. li. 15, 16.

<sup>6</sup> ISAI. li. 3.



ly represented by the restoration of ancient chaos, so the same event is sometimes expressed in metaphors suggested by the universal deluge :

" Ecce Iehova evacuat terram, eamque vastat ;  
 " Et invertit faciem eius, et dispergit incolas.—  
 " Nam aperiuntur ex alto Cataractae,  
 " Et fundamenta terrae concutiuntur.  
 " Confringendo confringit se tellus ;  
 " Disrumpendo disrumpit se tellus ;  
 " Commovendo penitus commovetur tellus :  
 " Nutando nutat tellus, sicut ebrius ;  
 " Et e loco suo vacillat, ut tugurium unius noctis."<sup>7</sup>

These are great ideas ; indeed the human mind cannot easily conceive any thing greater or more sublime. There is nothing, however, of this kind more forcible and elevated than that imagery which is taken from the destruction of Sodom, that being the next in order of these topics, and generally applied to express the punishments to be inflicted by the Almighty on the wicked :

" Depluet super impios prunas ardentes,  
 " Ignem et sulphur et ventum turbinum : hoc iis poculum exhaui-  
 " endum est."<sup>8</sup>(B)

" Nam agitur dies ultionis Iehovae ;  
 " Annus poenarum sumendarum Sionis vindici :  
 " Et vertentur torrentes eius in picem,  
 " Et pulvis eius in sulphur ;  
 " Et terra eius in ardentem picem redigetur :  
 " Noctes diesque inextincta ardebit :  
 " Fumus eius in aeternum ascendet :  
 " In perpetuas aetates iacebit deserta ;  
 " Per infinita saecula nemo eam peragrabit."<sup>9</sup>(C)

The emigration of the Israelites from Egypt, as it affords materials for many magnificent descriptions, is commonly applied in a metaphorical manner to many events, which bear no unapt resemblance to it. Does God promise to his people liberty, assistance, security, and favour ? The *Exodus* occurs spontaneously to the mind of the poet ; the dividing of the sea, the destruction of the enemy, the desert which was safely traversed, and the torrents bursting forth from the rocks, are so many splendid objects that force themselves on his imagination :

" Ita edicit Iehova,  
 " Qui praebebat per aequor viam,

<sup>7</sup> ISAI. XXIV. 1, 18, 19, 20.

<sup>8</sup> PSAL. xi. 6.

<sup>9</sup> ISAI. XXXIV. 8, 9, 10.



- " Et per aquas validas semitam :  
 " Qui educit currum et equum, exercitum et robur ;  
 " Simul iacebunt, nunquam consurgent,  
 " Oppressi sunt, ut stupa extincti :  
 " Ne recolite priora,  
 " Et antiqua ne considerate :  
 " Ecce ego novum quiddam sum facturus ;  
 " Iamiam orietur ; nonne illud cognoscetis ?  
 " Praestabo etiam in solitudine viam ;  
 " In deserto flumina." <sup>10</sup>

There is also another prophecy of the same divine poet, which in one sense (though I think not the principal) is to be understood as relating to the liberation of the Israelites from the Babylonish captivity. In the exordium the same imagery is introduced, but in a very noble personification, than which nothing can be more sublime :

- " Expergiscere, expergiscere, indue robur, o lacerte Iehovae !  
 " Expergiscere, ut priscis diebus, aetatibus antiquis !  
 " Annon tu ille es, qui excidisti superbum, vulnerasti crocodilum ?  
 " Annon tu ille es, qui exsiccasti pelagus, aquas Abyssi magnae ?  
 " Qui maris profunda reddidisti pervia, ut redempti transirent ?" <sup>11</sup>

Of the same kind is the last of these topics which I shall instance, the descent of JEHOVAH at the delivery of the law. When the Almighty is described as coming to execute judgement, to deliver the pious, and to destroy his enemies, or in any manner exerting his divine power upon earth, the description is embellished from that tremendous scene which was exhibited upon mount Sinai :<sup>12</sup> there is no imagery more frequently recurred to than this, and there is none more sublime : I will only trouble you with two examples :

- " Ecce autem Iehova e loco suo prodit ;  
 " Et descendit, et super terrae fastigia graditur.  
 " Et subter illum liquescunt montes,  
 " Et valles sese discindunt :  
 " Instar cerae ante ignem ;  
 " Instar aquarum per declive praecipitantium." <sup>13</sup>  
 " Tum concussa est et intremuit tellus ;  
 " Et fundamenta montium commoventur,  
 " Vehementer conquassantur ; nam ira illius exaestuât.  
 " Ascendit fumus in eius nares ;  
 " Et e faucibus eius ignis edax ;  
 " Exeunt ab eo ardentis prunae.  
 " Inclinat oculos, et descendit ;

<sup>10</sup> ISAÏ. xliiii. 16—19. See also xlviii. 21.

<sup>12</sup> See EXOD. xix. 16, 23. DEUT. iv. 11, 12.

<sup>11</sup> ISAÏ. li. 9, 10.

<sup>13</sup> MIC. i. 3, 4.

" Sub pedibus eius caligo densa :  
 " Et inequitat Cherubo, et volat ;  
 " Et fertur super alis venti.  
 " Facit tenebras penetrabile suum,  
 " Tabernaculum sibi circum undique ;  
 " Tenebras aquarum, densa nubium.  
 " A fulgore praesentiae eius nubes diffugiunt ;  
 " Emicat grando prunaeque candentes.  
 " Tum intonat e coelo Iehova,  
 " Et altissimus edit vocem suam,  
 " Cum grandine prunisque candentibus :  
 " Et telis suis hostes dissipat,  
 " Et crebris fulguribus attonitos agit." <sup>14</sup>(n)

These examples, though literally translated, and destitute of the harmony of verse, will I think sufficiently demonstrate the force, the grandeur and sublimity of these images, which, when applied to other events, suggest ideas still greater, than when described as plain facts by the pen of the historian, in however magnificent terms : for to the greatness and sublimity of the images which are alluded to, is added the pleasure and admiration which results from the comparison between them and the objects which they are brought to illustrate.

It is, however, worthy of observation, that, since many of these images possess such a degree of resemblance as renders them equally fit for the illustration of the same objects, it frequently happens that several of them are collected together, in order to magnify and embellish some particular event : of this there is an example in that very thanksgiving ode of David, which we have just now quoted.<sup>15</sup> For, after describing the wrath and majesty of God, in imagery taken from the descent upon mount Sinai, as already explained, in the very next verse, the division of the Red Sea and the river Jordan is alluded to :

" Tum apparebant alvei aquarum ;  
 " Retegebantur orbis fundamenta :  
 " Ab increpatione tua, o Iehova ;  
 " Ab halitu spiritus irae tuae." <sup>16</sup>

It is evident, however, as well from the examples which have been adduced, as from the nature of the thing itself, that this species

<sup>14</sup> PSAL. xviii. 7—14.

<sup>15</sup> See also ISAI. xxxiv. and what is remarked on that passage, Lect. XX.

<sup>16</sup> PSAL. xviii. 16.



of metaphor is peculiarly adapted to the prophetic poetry. For some degree of obscurity is the necessary attendant upon prophecy; not that, indeed, which confuses the diction, and darkens the style; but that which results from the necessity of repressing a part of the future, and from the impropriety of making a complete revelation of every circumstance connected with the prediction. The event itself, therefore, is often clearly indicated, but the manner and the circumstances are generally involved in obscurity. To this purpose imagery such as we have specified, is excellently adapted, for it enables the prophet more forcibly to impress upon the minds of his auditors those parts of his subject which admit of amplification, the force, the splendour, the magnitude of every incident; and at the same time more completely to conceal, what are proper to be concealed, the order, the mode, and the minuter circumstances attending the event. It is also no less apparent, that in this respect the sacred poetry bears little or no analogy to that of other nations; since neither history nor fable afforded to the profane writers a sufficiently important store of this kind of imagery; nor did their subjects in general require that use or application of it.

This species of metaphor is indeed so adapted, as I before observed, to the nature of prophecy, that even profane poetry, when of the prophetic kind, is not altogether destitute of it: and we find that Virgil himself, in delivering his prophecies, has more than once adopted this method:

" Non Simois tibi, nec Xanthus, nec Dorica Castra

" Defuerint: alius Latio iam partus Achilles,

" Natus et ipse Dea.

" Alter erit tum Tithys, et altera quae vehat Argo

" Delectos heroes: erunt etiam altera bella,

" Atque iterum ad Troiam magnus mittetur Achilles:"<sup>17</sup>

Though some will perhaps be inclined to interpret this passage literally from the completion of the *great year*, and the doctrine of the general restitution of all things.<sup>18</sup> There is, indeed, this difference between the sacred and profane writers, that among the latter we find frequent examples of metaphors taken from some remarkable person and event, applied to some other event or character; but we never find from such facts a general or common image derived,

<sup>17</sup> Virgil, *Æn.* vi. 135. *Eclog.* iv. 41.

<sup>18</sup> See ORIGEN contra Celsum, Lib. iv. p. 208. Edit. Spencer.



which, as an established mode of expression, is regularly applied to the illustration of similar objects, even to the designation of a universal or unlimited idea.(x)

I have classed all these examples under one general head of metaphor, though many of them might more properly be referred to that of allegory: but this circumstance is of no importance to the object which I was desirous of elucidating. Many, indeed, of those which I have produced on this last occasion, might more properly be referred to that sublimer kind of allegory, which, in its principal view, looks forward to a meaning much more important than that which is obvious and literal; and under the ostensible subject, as under a rind or shell, conceals one interior and more sacred. Of this, however, we shall presently have occasion to speak more explicitly; for when we come to treat of the allegory of the Hebrews, it will be necessary to touch upon that species (however difficult and obscure the subject) in which the sublimity of many of the sacred poems will be found chiefly to consist.(y)

## LECTURE X.

### OF ALLEGORY.

Three forms of allegory: 1. Continued Metaphor; which is scarcely worth distinguishing from the simple Metaphor—The freedom of the Hebrews in confounding the forms of the Metaphor, Allegory, and Comparison: a more perfect form also of Allegory instanced—2. The Parable; and its principal characteristics: that it ought to be formed from an apt and well known image, the signification of which is obvious and definite; also from one which is elegant and beautiful; that its parts and adjuncts be perspicuous, and conduce to the main object; that it be consistent, and must not confound the literal and figurative meaning—The Parables of the Prophets, and particularly of Ezekiel, examined according to this standard.

ANOTHER branch of the הַשְׁוּיָה or figurative style, is Allegory, that is, a figure which, under the literal sense of the words, conceals a foreign or distant meaning. Three forms of allegory may be observed in the sacred poetry. The first is that which is commonly treated of by rhetoricians, a continuation of metaphor. "When several kindred metaphors succeed one another, they alter," says Cicero, "the form of a composition; for which reason a succession of this kind is called by the Greeks an *Allegory*; and properly, in respect to the etymology of the word; but Aristotle, instead of considering it as a new species of figure, has more judiciously comprised such modes of expression under the general appellation of metaphors."<sup>1</sup> I therefore scarcely esteem it worth while to dwell upon this species of allegory; since hitherto I have made no distinction between it and the simple metaphor: for many of the examples, which I produced as metaphors, are probably of this class: the principle of each is the same, nor indeed would it be an easy matter to restrict each to its proper limits, or to define where the one ends or the other begins.

It will not, however, be foreign to our purpose to remark the peculiar manner, in which the Hebrew poets use the congenial figures, metaphor, allegory, and comparison, and particularly in the prophetic poetry. When they undertake to express any sentiment in ornamented language, they not only illustrate it with an abundance and variety of imagery, but they seldom temper or regulate this imagery

<sup>1</sup> Orator.

by any fixed principle or standard. Unsatisfied with a simple metaphor, they frequently run it into an allegory, or mingle with it a direct comparison. The allegory sometimes precedes and sometimes follows the simile; to this is added a frequent change of imagery, and even of persons and tenses; through the whole displaying a degree of boldness and freedom, unconfined by rule or method, altogether peculiar to the Hebrew poetry.

“Judah is a lion’s whelp :”<sup>2</sup>

This metaphor is immediately drawn out into an allegory, with a change of person :

“From the prey, my son, thou art gone up ;”

(to the dens in the mountains, understood :) In the succeeding sentences the person is again changed, the image is gradually advanced, and the metaphor is joined with a comparison, which is repeated :

“He stoopeth down, he coucheth, as a lion,

“And as a lioness ; who shall rouse him ?”

Of a similar nature is that remarkable prophecy, in which the exuberant increase of the gospel on its first dissemination is most explicitly foretold. In this passage, however, the mixture of the metaphor and comparison, as well as the ellipsis of the word to be repeated, creates a degree of obscurity :

“Beyond the womb of the morning is the dew of thy offspring to thee :”<sup>3</sup>

That is, “preferable to the dew which proceeds from the womb of morning; more copious, more abundant.” In the interpretation of this passage, what monstrous blunders has an ignorance of the Hebrew idiom produced ! (A)

There is, indeed, a certain form, which this kind of allegory sometimes assumes, more perfect and regular, which therefore ought not to be overlooked, and that is, when it occupies the whole compass and argument of the composition. An excellent example of this may be seen in that well known allegory of Solomon,<sup>4</sup> in which old age is so admirably depicted. The inconveniences of increasing years, the debility of mind and body, the torpor of the senses, are expressed, most learnedly and elegantly indeed, but with some degree of obscurity, by different images derived from nature and common life: for by this enigmatical composition, Solomon, after the manner of the Oriental sages, meant to put to trial the acuteness of his readers. It has on this account afforded much exercise to the

<sup>2</sup> GEN. xlix. 9.

<sup>3</sup> PSALM cx. 3.

<sup>4</sup> ECCLES. xii. 2—6.



ingenuity of the learned, many of whom have differently, it is true, but with much learning and sagacity, explained the passage.(b)

There is also in Isaiah an allegory, which, with no less elegance of imagery, is more simple and regular, more just and complete in the form and colouring: I shall, therefore, quote the whole passage.<sup>5</sup> The prophet is explaining the design and manner of the divine judgements: he is inculcating the principle, that God adopts different modes of acting in the chastisement of the wicked, but that the most perfect wisdom is conspicuous in all; that "he will," as he had urged before, "exact judgement by the line, and righteousness by the plummet;"<sup>6</sup> that he ponders with the most minute attention the distinctions of times, characters, and circumstances; all the motives to lenity or severity. All this is expressed in a continued allegory, the imagery of which is taken from agriculture and threshing: the use and suitableness of which imagery, as in a manner consecrated to this subject, I have formerly explained, so that there is no need of further detail at present.

- "Aures advertite, atque audite vocem meam;  
 "Attendite et auscultate sermoni meo:  
 "Num omni tempore arat arator ad serendum;  
 "Proscindit et offringit terram suam?  
 "Nonne cum complanavit eius superficiem,  
 "Tum spargit nigellam, aut disiciit cuminum,  
 "Et mandat far certa mensura,  
 "Et hordeo signatum est et zee spatium suum?  
 "Nam perfecte eum instituit, Deus eius ipsum erudit.  
 "Neque vero tribulo tritatur nigella,  
 "Nec rota plostelli super cuminum circumagitur:  
 "Sed virga excutitur nigella,  
 "Et cuminum baculo; far autem tritura exteritur.  
 "Nec tamen hoc perpetuo perget triturare;  
 "Aut agitabit rota plostelli sui;  
 "Neque ungulis suis semper exeret.  
 "Etiam hoc a Iehova provenit:  
 "Mirabilem se praestat consilio, magnificum effectum."(c)

Another kind of allegory is that, which, in the proper and restricted sense, may be called parable, and consists of a continued narration of a fictitious event, applied by way of simile to the illustration of some important truth. The Greeks call these allegories *αἶνοι* or *ἀπόλογοι*, the Latins *fabulae*: and the writings of the Phrygian sage, or those composed in imitation of him, have ac-

<sup>5</sup> ISAI. xxviii. 23—29.

<sup>6</sup> ISAI. xxviii. 17.

quired the greatest celebrity. Nor has our Saviour himself disdained to adopt the same method of instruction, of whose parables it is doubtful, whether they excel most in wisdom and utility, or in sweetness, elegance and perspicuity. I must observe, that the appellation of parable having been applied to his discourses of this kind, the term is now restricted from its former extensive signification to a more confined sense. This species of composition occurs very frequently in the prophetic poetry, and particularly in that of Ezekiel. But to enable us to judge with more certainty upon the subject, it will be necessary to explain in a few words some of the primary qualities of the poetic parables, that, by considering the general nature of them, we may decide more accurately on the merits of particular examples.

It is the first excellence of a parable to turn upon an image well known and applicable to the subject, the meaning of which is clear and definite; for this circumstance will give it perspicuity, which is essential to every species of allegory. If, therefore, by this rule we examine the parables of the sacred prophets, we shall, I am persuaded, find them not in the least deficient. They are in general founded upon such imagery as is frequently used, and similarly applied by way of metaphor and comparison in the Hebrew poetry. Most accurate examples of this are to be found in the parable of the deceitful vineyard,<sup>7</sup> of the useless vine,<sup>8</sup> which is given to the fire; for under this imagery the ungrateful people of God are more than once described. I may instance also that of the lion's whelps falling into the pit,<sup>9</sup> in which is appositely displayed the captivity of the Jewish princes; or that of the fair, lofty, and flourishing cedar of Lebanon,<sup>10</sup> which raised its head to the clouds, cut down at length and neglected; exhibiting, as in a picture, the prosperity and the fall of the king of Assyria. I will add one more example (there is, indeed, scarcely any which might not with propriety be introduced here,) I mean that, in which the love of God towards his people, and their piety and fidelity to him, are expressed by an allusion to the solemn covenant of marriage. Ezekiel has pursued this image with uncommon freedom in two parables;<sup>11</sup> in truth almost all the sacred poets have touched upon it. There was, therefore, no part of the imagery of the Hebrew poetry more established than this; nor ought it to appear extraordinary, that Solomon, in that most elegant

<sup>7</sup> ISA. v. 1—7.

<sup>8</sup> EZEK. xv. and xix. 10—14.

<sup>9</sup> EZEK. xix. 1—9.

<sup>10</sup> EZEK. xxxi.

<sup>11</sup> EZEK. xvi. and xxiii.

poem, the Canticles, should distinguish and depict the most sacred of all subjects with similar outlines and in similar colours.(D)

It is not, however, sufficient, that the image be apt and familiar; it must also be elegant and beautiful in itself: since it is for the purpose of a poetic parable, not only to explain more perfectly some proposition, but frequently to give it more animation and splendour. The imagery from natural objects is superior to all other in this respect; for almost every picture from nature, if accurately drawn, has its peculiar beauty. As the parables of the sacred poets, therefore, consist chiefly of this kind of imagery, the elegance of the materials generally serves to recommend them. If there be any of a different kind, such as may be accounted less delicate and refined, it ought to be considered, whether they are not to be accounted among those, the dignity and grace of which are lost to us, though they were perhaps wanting in neither to people of the same age and country. If any reader, for instance, should be offended with the boiling pot of Ezekiel,<sup>12</sup> and the scum flowing over into the fire; let him remember, that the prophet, who was also a priest, took the allusion from his own sacred rites: nor is there a possibility, that an image could be accounted mean or disgusting, which was connected with the holy ministration of the temple.

It is also essential to the elegance of a parable, that the imagery should not only be apt and beautiful, but that all its parts and appendages should be perspicuous and pertinent. It is, however, by no means necessary, that in every parable the allusion should be complete in every part; such a degree of resemblance would frequently appear too minute and exact: but when the nature of the subject will bear, much more when it will even require a fuller explanation; and when the similitude runs directly, naturally, and regularly, through every circumstance, then it cannot be doubted that it is productive of the greatest beauty. Of all these excellencies, there cannot be more perfect examples than the parables which have been just specified. I will also venture to recommend the well known parable of Nathan,<sup>13</sup> although written in prose, as well as that of Jotham,<sup>14</sup> which appears to be the most ancient extant, and approaches somewhat nearer the poetical form.(E)

To these remarks I will add another, which may be considered as the criterion of a parable, namely, that it be consistent throughout, and that the literal be never confounded with the figu-

<sup>12</sup> EZEK. XXIV. 3, &c.

<sup>13</sup> 2 SAM. XII. 1—4.

<sup>14</sup> JUD. IX. 7—15.



rative sense. In this respect it materially differs from the former species of allegory, which, deviating but gradually from the simple metaphor, does not always immediately exclude literal expressions, or words without a figure. But both the fact itself, and this distinction, will more evidently appear from an example of each kind.

The psalmist, (whoever he was) describing the people of Israel as a vine,<sup>15</sup> has continued the metaphor, and happily drawn it out through a variety of additional circumstances. Among the many beauties of this allegory, not the least graceful is that modesty, with which he enters upon and concludes his subject, making an easy and gradual transition from plain to figurative language, and no less delicately receding back to the plain and unornamented narrative.

“ Ex Aegypto eduxisti vitem ;  
 “ Eiecisti gentes eamque plantasti :  
 “ Ante faciem eius praeparasti locum ”——

After this follow some figurative expressions, less cautiously introduced : in which when he has indulged for some time, how elegantly does he revert to his proper subject !

“ Revertere, o Deus exercituum ;  
 “ De coelo despice et intueri,  
 “ Et vitis huius curam suscipe :  
 “ Et germinis quod tua plantavit dextera,  
 “ Et sobolis quam tibi confirmasti.  
 “ Igni comburitur penitusque succiditur ;  
 “ Per vultus tui increpationem pereunt.  
 “ Sit manus tua super virum dexteræ tuæ,  
 “ Super sobolem illam hominis quam tibi confirmasti.”(r)

You may easily perceive, gentlemen, how, in this first kind of allegory, the literal may be mingled with the figurative sense ; and even how graceful this practice appears, since light is more agreeably thrown upon the subject in an oblique manner, without too bare and direct an explication. But it is different, when the same image puts on the form of the other sort of allegory, or parable, as in Isaiah.<sup>16</sup> Here is no room for literal, or even ambiguous expressions ; every word is figurative ; the whole mass of colouring is taken from the same pallet. Thus what, in the former quotation, is expressed in undisguised language, namely, “ the casting out of the nations, the preparation of the place, and its destruction from the rebuke of the

<sup>15</sup> PSAL. lxxx. 9—18.

<sup>16</sup> Chap. v. 1—7

Lord," is by Isaiah expressed wholly in a figurative manner:—"The Lord gathered out the stones from his vineyard, and cleared it: but when it deceived him, he threw down its hedge, and made it waste, and commanded the clouds that they should rain no rain upon it." Expressions, which in the one case possess a peculiar grace, would be absurd and incongruous in the other. For the continued metaphor and the parable have a very different aim. The sole intention of the former is to embellish a subject, to represent it more magnificently, or at the most to illustrate it; that, by describing it in more elevated language, it may strike the mind more forcibly: but the intent of the latter is to withdraw the truth for a moment from our sight, in order to conceal whatever it may contain ungraceful or disgusting, and to enable it secretly to insinuate itself, and obtain an ascendancy as it were by stealth. There is, however, a species of parable, the intent of which is only to illustrate the subject, such is that remarkable one of Ezekiel,<sup>17</sup> which I just now commended, of the cedar of Lebanon: than which, if we consider the imagery itself, none was ever more apt or more beautiful; if the description and colouring, none was ever more elegant or splendid; in which, however, the poet has occasionally allowed himself to blend the figurative with the literal description:<sup>18</sup> whether he has done this because the peculiar nature of this kind of parable required it, or whether his own fervid imagination alone, which disdained the stricter rules of composition, was his guide, I can scarcely presume to determine.

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<sup>17</sup> Chap. xxxi.

<sup>18</sup> See v. 11, 14—17.

## LECTURE XI.

### OF THE MYSTICAL ALLEGORY.

The definition of the *Mystical Allegory*—Founded upon the allegorical or typical nature of the Jewish religion—The distinction between this and the two former species of allegory ; in the nature of the materials ; it being allowable in the former to make use of imagery from indifferent objects ; in this, only such as is derived from things sacred, or their opposites ; in the former, the exterior image has no foundation in truth ; in the latter, both images are equally true—The difference in the form or manner of treating them—The most beautiful form is when the corresponding images run parallel through the whole poem, and mutually illustrate each other—Examples of this is the second and seventy-second Psalms—The parabolic style admirably adapted to this species of allegory ; the nature of which renders it the language most proper for prophecy—Extremely dark in itself, but it is gradually cleared up by the series of events foretold, and more complete revelation ; time also, which in the general obscurity, contributes to its full explanation.

THE third species of allegory, which also prevails much in the prophetic poetry, is when a double meaning is couched under the same words ; or when the same production, according as it is differently interpreted, relates to different events, distant in time, and distinct in their nature. These different relations are termed the literal and the mystical senses ; and these constitute one of the most difficult and important topics of Theology. The subject is, however, connected also with the sacred poetry, and is therefore deserving of a place in these lectures.

In the sacred rites of the Hebrews, things, places, times, offices, and such like, sustain as it were a double character, the one proper or literal, the other allegorical ; and in their writings these subjects are sometimes treated of in such a manner, as to relate either to the one sense or the other, singly, or to both united. For instance, a composition may treat of David, of Solomon, of Jerusalem, so as to be understood to relate simply either to the city itself and its monarchs, or else to those objects, which, in the sacred allegory of the Jewish religion, are denoted by that city and by those monarchs : or the mind of the author may embrace both objects at once, so that the very words which express the one in the plain, proper, historical, and commonly received sense, may typify the other in the sacred, interior, and prophetic sense.



From these principles of the Jewish religion, this kind of allegory, which I am inclined to call mystical, seems more especially to derive its origin, and from these we must endeavour at an explanation of it. But its nature and peculiar properties will probably be more easily demonstrable, if we previously define in what respects it is different from the two former species of allegory.

The first remarkable difference is, that in allegories of the kind already noticed, the writer is at liberty to make use of whatever imagery is most agreeable to his fancy or inclination : there is nothing in universal nature, nothing which the mind perceives, either by sense or reflection, which may not be adapted in the form of a continued metaphor, or even of a parable, to the illustration of some other subject. This latter kind of allegory, on the contrary, can only be supplied with proper materials from the sacred rites of the Hebrews themselves ; nor can it be introduced, except in relation to such things as are directly connected with the Jewish religion, or their immediate opposites. For to Israel, Sion, Jerusalem, in the allegorical as well as the literal sense, are opposed Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Idumea ; and the same opposition exists in other subjects of a similar nature. The two former kinds of allegory are of the same general nature with the other figures, and partake of the common privileges of poetry ; this latter, or mystical allegory, has its foundation in the nature of the Jewish economy, and is adapted solely to the poetry of the Hebrews. Hence that truly Divine Spirit, which has not disdained to employ poetry as the interpreter of its sacred will, has also in a manner appropriated to its own use this kind of allegory, as peculiarly adapted to the publication of future events, and to the typifying of the most sacred mysteries : so that should it, on any occasion, be applied to a profane and common subject ; being diverted from its proper end, and forced as it were from its natural bias, it would inevitably want all its power and elegance.(A)

There is likewise this further distinction, that in those other forms of allegory, the exterior or ostensible imagery is fiction only ; the truth lies altogether in the interior or remote sense, which is veiled as it were under this thin and pellucid covering. But in the allegory, of which we are now treating, each idea is equally agreeable to truth. The exterior or ostensible image is not a shadowy colouring of the interior sense, but is in itself a reality ; and although it sustain another character, it does not wholly lay aside its own. For instance, in the metaphor or parable, the lion, the eagle, the ce-

dar, considered with respect to their identical existence, are altogether destitute of reality ; but what we read of David, Solomon, or Jerusalem, in this sublimer kind of allegory, may be either accepted in a literal sense, or may be mystically interpreted according to the religion of the Hebrews, and in each view, whether considered conjunctly or apart, will be found equally agreeable to truth.

Thus far this kind of allegory differs from the former in the materials, or in the nature of the imagery which it employs ; but there is some difference also in the form or manner of introducing this imagery. I had occasion before to remark the liberty, which is allowed in the continued metaphor, of mingling the literal with the figurative meaning, that is, the obvious with the remote idea ; which is a liberty altogether inconsistent with the nature of a parable. But to establish any certain rules with regard to this point in the conduct of the mystical allegory, would be a difficult and hazardous undertaking. For the Holy Spirit has evidently chosen different modes of revealing his sacred counsels, according to the circumstances of persons and times, inciting and directing at pleasure the minds of his prophets : at one time displaying with an unbounded liberality the clear indications of future events ; at another imparting some obscure intimations with a sparing hand. Thus there is a vast variety in the use and conduct of the mystical allegory ; in the modes in which the corresponding images are arranged, and in which they are obscured or eclipsed by one another. Sometimes the obvious or literal sense is so prominent and conspicuous, both in the words and sentiments, that the remote or figurative sense is scarcely permitted to glimmer through it.(v) On the other hand, and that more frequently, the figurative sense is found to beam forth with so much perspicuity and lustre, that the literal sense is quite cast into a shade, or becomes indiscernible. Sometimes the principal or figurative idea is exhibited to the attentive eye with a constant and equal light ; and sometimes it unexpectedly glares upon us, and breaks forth with sudden and astonishing coruscations, like a flash of lightning bursting from the clouds. But the mode or form of this figure, which possesses the most beauty and elegance (and that elegance is the principal object of this disquisition) is, when the two images equally conspicuous run, as it were, parallel through the whole poem, mutually illustrating and correspondent to each other. Though the subject be obscure, I do not fear being able to produce one or two undoubted instances of this peculiar excellence,



which, if I am not mistaken, will sufficiently explain what I have advanced concerning the nature of the mystical allegory.

The subject of the second Psalm is the establishment of David upon the throne, agreeably to the almighty decree, notwithstanding the fruitless opposition of his enemies. The character which David sustains in this poem is twofold, literal and allegorical. If on the first reading of the Psalm we consider the character of David in the literal sense, the composition appears sufficiently perspicuous, and abundantly illustrated by facts from the sacred history. Through the whole, indeed, there is an unusual fervour of language, a brilliancy of metaphor; and sometimes the diction is uncommonly elevated, as if to intimate, that something of a more sublime and important nature lay concealed within; and as if the poet had some intention of admitting us to the secret recesses of his subject. If, in consequence of this indication, we turn our minds to contemplate the internal sense, and apply the same passages to the allegorical David, a nobler series of events is presented to us, and a meaning not only more sublime, but even more perspicuous, rises to the view. Should any thing at first appear bolder and more elevated than the obvious sense would bear, it will now at once appear clear, expressive, and admirably adapted to the dignity of the principal subject. If, after having considered attentively the subjects apart, we examine them at length in a united view, the beauty and sublimity of this most elegant poem will be improved.(c) We may then perceive the vast disparity of the two images, and yet the continual harmony and agreement that subsists between them, the amazing resemblance, as between near relations, in every feature and lineament, and the accurate analogy which is preserved, so that either may pass for the original, whence the other was copied. New light is reflected upon the diction, and a degree of dignity and importance is added to the sentiments, whilst they gradually rise from humble to more elevated objects, from human to divine, till at length the great subject of the poem is placed in the most conspicuous light, and the composition attains the highest point of sublimity.

What has been remarked concerning this Psalm, may be applied with propriety to the seventy-second, which exactly resembles it both in matter and form. It might not improperly be entitled the inauguration of Solomon. The nature of the allegory is the same with the former; the style is something different, on account of the disparity of the subject. In the one the pomp and splendour of victory



is displayed ; in the other the placid image of peace and felicity. The style of the latter is, therefore, more calm and temperate, more ornamented, more figurative ; not abounding in the same boldness of personification as the former, but rather touched with the gay and cheerful colouring of nature, in its most flourishing and delightful state. From this example some light will be thrown upon the nature

of the parabolic style ; in particular it will appear admirably adapted to this kind of allegory, on account of its abounding so much in this species of imagery. For as the imagery of nature is equally calculated to express the ideas of divine and spiritual, or of human things, a certain analogy being preserved in each ; so it easily admits that degree of ambiguity, which appears essential to this figure. By these means the composition is at the same time diversified and picturesque, applicable to both senses, and obscure in neither ; and completely comprehending both parts of the allegory, may clearly and distinctly be referred to either.

Still, however, a degree of obscurity must occasionally attend this style of composition ; and this obscurity not only results from the nature of the figure, but is even not without its peculiar utility. For the mystical allegory is on this very account so agreeable to the nature of prophecy, that it is the form which the latter generally, and I might add lawfully, assumes, as most fitted for the prediction of future events. It describes events in a manner exactly conformable to the intention of prophecy ; that is, in a dark, disguised, and intricate manner ; sketching out in a general way their form and outline ; and seldom descending to minuteness of description, and exactness of detail. If on some occasions it expressly signifies any notable circumstance, it seems to be for two principal reasons :<sup>1</sup> First, that, as generally happens, by suddenly withdrawing from our view the literal meaning, the attention may be excited to the investigation of the figurative sense ; and secondly, that certain express marks, or distinguishing features, may occasionally shew themselves, which, after the accomplishment of the prediction, may be sufficient to remove every doubt, and to assert and confirm, in all points, the truth and divinity of the prophecy.

The prophetic, indeed, differs in one respect from every other species of the sacred poetry : when first divulged it is impenetrably obscure ; and time, which darkens every other composition, eluci-

<sup>1</sup> Psal. xlii 17, 18, 19. and lxi 22

dates this. That obscurity, therefore, in which at first this part of the sacred writings was involved, is now in a great measure removed ; there are now many things which the course of events (the most certain interpreter of prophecy) has completely laid open ; from many the Holy Spirit has itself condescended to remove the veil, with which they were at first concealed ; many sacred institutions there are, the reason and intent of which are more clearly understood, since the design of the Jewish dispensation has been more perfectly revealed. Thus it happens, that, instructed and supported by these aids, of which the ancient Hebrews were destitute, and which in truth appear not to have been conceded to the prophets themselves, we come better accomplished for the knowledge and comprehension of that part of the sacred poetry, which is the most singular in its nature, and by far the most difficult of explanation.(D)

## LECTURE XII.

### OF THE COMPARISON.

Comparisons are introduced for three purposes; illustration, amplification, and variety.—For the first an image is requisite, apt, well known, and perspicuous; it is of little consequence whether it be sublime or beautiful, or neither: hence comparisons from objects which are in themselves mean and humble, may be sometimes useful.—For the purpose of amplification an image is requisite which is sublime, or beautiful, even though it should be less apt and perspicuous: and on this plea a degree of obscurity, or a remoteness in the resemblance, may sometimes be excused.—When variety is the object, splendid, beautiful, and elegant imagery must be sought for; and which has an apt agreement with the object of the comparison in the circumstances or adjuncts, though the objects themselves may be different in kind.—The most perfect comparison is that, in which all these excellencies are united.—The peculiar form of comparisons in the Hebrew poetry; it results from the nature of the sententious style.—They are short, frequent, simple, depending often on a single attribute.—Different images displayed in the parallel sentences; many comparisons are arranged in this manner to illustrate the same subject; or different attributes of the same comparison are often distributed in the different divisions or parallelisms.

In the following Lecture I shall endeavour to treat of the comparison, which I have classed the third in order of the poetical figures, with a view of illustrating in some degree both its general properties, and its peculiar application and force in the poetic compositions of the Hebrews.

Comparisons serve three distinct purposes, namely, illustration, amplification, and pleasure or variety.

In the first place, comparisons are introduced to illustrate a subject, and to place it in a clearer and more conspicuous point of view. This is most successfully effected, when the object which furnishes the simile is familiar and perspicuous, and when it exactly agrees with that to which it is compared. In this species of comparison elevation or beauty, sublimity or splendour, are of little consequence; strict propriety, and a direct resemblance, calculated exactly for the explanation of the subject, is a sufficient commendation. Thus Homer very accurately depicts the numbers of the Grecian army, their ardour and eagerness for battle, by a comparison taken from flies collected about a milk pail; and Virgil compares the diligence of the Tyrians in building their city, and the variety of their occupations, with the labours of the bees; without in the least degrading the dignity of the epic muse.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> IL. II. 469. Æn. I. 432. Compare Milton's *Paradise Lost*, I. 768.



I might produce many examples to the purpose from the sacred poetry, but shall content myself with two or three, than which, both as to matter and expression, nothing can be meaner or more vulgar, nothing, however, can be conceived more forcible or expressive. Isaiah introduces the king of Assyria insolently boasting of his victories :

"Nacta est manus hæc tanquam nidum populorum copias :

"Et ut colliguntur ova derelicta,

"Ita omnes ego teras collegi ;

"Neque erat qui alam motitaret,

"Aut qui aperto ore pipiret."<sup>2</sup>

And Nahum on a similar subject :

"Omnes munitiones tuæ erunt ut ficus præmaturis fructibus ;

"Si concutientur, cadent illico in os devorantis."<sup>3</sup>

There is also another comparison of Isaiah taken from domestic life, very obvious and very common ; but which for the gracefulness of the imagery, the elegance of the arrangement, and the forcible expression of the tenderest affections, has never been exceeded :

"Atqui Sion dicit ; Iehova me dereliquit,

"Et Dominus meus oblitus est mei.

"Num obliviscetur mulier sui infantis ;

"Ita ut non misereatur filii uteri sui ?

"Etiam illæ equidem oblivisci poterint ;

"Ego vero tui non obliviscar."<sup>4</sup>

There is another species of comparison, the principal intent of which is the amplification of the subject ; and this is evidently of a different nature from the former : for, in the first place, it is necessary that the image which is introduced for the purpose of amplifying or ennobling a subject, be sublime, beautiful, magnificent, or splendid, and therefore not trite or common ; nor is it by any means necessary that the resemblance be exact in every circumstance. Thus Virgil has the address to impart even to the labours of his bees a wonderful air of sublimity, by a comparison with the exertions of the Cyclops in fabricating the thunderbolts of Jupiter :<sup>5</sup> thus he admirably depicts the grace, the dignity and strength of his Æneas, by comparing him with Apollo on the top of Cynthus renewing the sacred chorus ; or with the mountains Athos, Eryx, and Appennine.<sup>6</sup> Thus also Homer, in which he is imitated by Virgil, compares two

<sup>2</sup> ISAI. x. 14.

<sup>3</sup> NAH. iii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> ISAI. xlix. 14, 15.

<sup>5</sup> GEORG. iv. 170.

<sup>6</sup> ÆN. iv. 143. xii. 701.

heroes rushing to battle, with Mars and his offspring Terror advancing from Thrace to the Phlegyans and Ephyrians.<sup>7</sup> But if it should be objected, that as comparisons of the former kind are wanting in dignity, so these (in which familiar objects are compared with objects but little known, or with objects which have little agreement or resemblance to them) are more likely to obscure than to illustrate; let it be remembered, that each species of comparison has in view a different end. The aim of the poet in the one case is perspicuity, to enable the mind clearly to perceive the subject, and to comprehend the whole of it at one view; in the other the object is sublimity, or to impress the reader with the idea that the magnitude of the subject is scarcely to be conceived. When considered in this light, it will, I dare presume, be allowed, that none of these forms of comparison, when rightly applied, is deficient, either in propriety or elegance.

The Hebrews have nothing that corresponds with those fables, to which the Greek and Roman poets have recourse, when amplification is required: nor can we be surprised that imagery so consecrated, so dignified by religion and antiquity, and yet of so obvious and established acceptation as to be intelligible to the meanest understanding, should supply abundant and suitable materials for this purpose. The sacred poets, therefore, resort in this case chiefly to the imagery of nature; and this they make use of, indeed, with so much elegance and freedom, that we have no cause to regret the want of those fictions, to which other nations have recourse. To express or delineate prosperity and opulence, a comparison is assumed from the cedar or the palm:<sup>8</sup> if the form of majesty or external beauty is to be depicted, Lebanon or Carmel is presented to our view.<sup>9</sup> Sometimes they are furnished with imagery from their religious rites, at once beautiful, dignified, and sacred. In both these modes, the Psalmist most elegantly extols the pleasures and advantages of fraternal concord:

"Ut aura suavis balsami, quum funditur

"Aronis in sacrum caput,

"Et imbre laeto proluens barbam et sinus

"Limbum pererrat aureum:

"Ut ros, tenella gemmulis argenteis

"Pingens Sionis gramina;

<sup>7</sup> IL. xiii. 298. ÆN. xiii. 331.

<sup>8</sup> PSAL. xcii. 12. NUMB. xxiv. 6. HOS. xiv. 6, 7, 8. AMOS ii. 9.

<sup>9</sup> See Lect. VI.



"Aut verna dulci inebrians uligine

"Hermonis intonsi iuga."<sup>10</sup>

Let us, however, attend for a moment to Isaiah, whom no writer has surpassed in propriety, when his aim is to illustrate; or in sublimity, when he means to amplify his subject:

"O tumultum populorum multorum!

"Instar tumultus marium tumultuantur:

"O fremitum nationum!

"Instar fremitus aquarum immanium confremunt.

"Populi instar fremitus aquarum multarum confremunt:

"Sed illo increpante procul fugient;

"Et agentur, ut gluma montium vento correpta,

"Utque stipula rotata turbine."<sup>11</sup>(A)

The third species of comparison seems to hold a middle rank between the two preceding: and the sole intent of it is, by a mixture of new and varied imagery with the principal matter, to prevent satiety or disgust, and to promote the entertainment of the reader. It neither descends to the humility of the one, nor emulates the sublimity of the other. It pursues rather the agreeable, the ornamental, the elegant, and ranges through all the variety, all the exuberance of nature. In so extensive a field it would be an infinite task to collect all that might be observed of each particular. I shall remark one circumstance only, which though it sometimes take place in the two former species of comparison, may be said notwithstanding to be chiefly appropriated to this last.

There are two operations of the mind, evidently contrary to each other. The one consists in combining ideas, the other in separating and distinguishing them. For in contemplating the innumerable forms of things, one of the first reflections which occurs is, that there are some which have an immediate agreement, and some which are directly contrary to each other. The mind, therefore, contemplates those objects which have a resemblance in their universal nature in such a manner, as naturally to inquire whether in any respect they so disagree, as to furnish any mark of discrimination; on the contrary, it investigates those which are generally different in such a manner, as to remark whether, in their circumstances or adjuncts, they may not possess something in common, which may serve as a bond of connexion or association to class or unite them. The final cause of the former of these operations seems to be—to caution and guard us

<sup>10</sup> PSAL. CXXXIII. 2, 3.

<sup>11</sup> ISAI. XVII. 12, 13.



against error, in confounding one with another; of the latter, to form a kind of repository of knowledge, which may be resorted to, as occasion serves, either for utility or pleasure. These constitute the two faculties, which are distinguished by the names of judgement and imagination.<sup>13</sup> As accuracy of judgement is demonstrated by discovering in things, which have in general a very strong resemblance, some partial disagreement; so the genius or fancy is entitled to the highest commendation, when in those objects, which upon the whole have the least agreement, some striking similarity is traced out.<sup>14</sup> In those comparisons, therefore, the chief purpose of which is ornament or pleasure, thus far may pass for an established principle, that they are most likely to accomplish this end, when the image is not only elegant and agreeable, but is also taken from an object, which in the general is materially different from the subject of comparison, and only aptly and pertinently agrees with it in one or two of its attributes.

But I shall probably explain myself better by an example. There is in Virgil a comparison, borrowed from Homer, of a boiling caldron.<sup>15</sup> Supposing in each part the versification and description equally elegant; still, as the relation between the things compared is different, so the grace and beauty of the comparison is different in the two poets. In Homer the waters of the river Xanthus boiling in their channel by the fire, which Vulcan has thrown into the river, are compared with the boiling of a heated caldron: but Virgil compares with the same object the mind of Turnus agitated by the torch of the fair Althea. The one brings together ideas manifestly alike, or rather indeed the same, and only differing in circumstances; the other, on the contrary, assimilates objects, which are evidently very different in their nature, but aptly agreeing in some of their attributes or circumstances. Thus the comparison of the Latin poet is new, diversified, and agreeable: but that of the

<sup>13</sup> See HUME'S *of Human Nature*, c. 1. sect. 4. and LOCKE'S *of Human Understanding*, B. II. c. 11. sect. 2.

<sup>14</sup> "Ingenuity of expression consists in metaphors, neither too remote, which are difficult to be understood; nor too simple and superficial, which do not afford the pleasure." ARIST. *Rhet.* III. IV. — For, as was before observed, metaphors consist in joining those objects that are dissimilar, yet not too plain and obvious. As, in philosophy, it is a mark of sagacity to detect similitude even in very dissimilar things. B. II. c. 11.

B. II. c. 11. 362

Greek, although not destitute of force in illustrating the subject, is undoubtedly wanting in all the graces of variety, ornament, and splendour.

For the same reason, there is perhaps no comparison of any poet extant more ingenious, more elegant or perfect in its kind, than the following of the same excellent poet :

"Quae Laomedontius heros  
 "Cuncta videns, magno curarum fluctuat aestu;  
 "Atque animum nunc huc celerem, nunc dividit illuc,  
 "In partesque rapit varias, perque omnia versat:  
 "Sicut aquae tremulum labris ubi lumen aënis  
 "Sole repercussum, aut radiantis imagine lunae,  
 "Omnia pervolitat late loca, iamque sub auras  
 "Erigitur, summique ferit laquearia tecti."15

He appears to be indebted for this passage to Apollonius Rhodius :

Πυκνά δὲ οἱ κραδίῃ στηθέων ἔντοσθεν ἔθενεν,  
 Ἡελίου ὥς τις τε δόμοις ἐνιπάλλεται αἶγλη  
 Ὑδατος ἑξανιοῦσα, τὸ δὴ νῖον ἱὲ λήβητι  
 Ἡὲ που ἐν γανυῶ κέχυται· ἡ δ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα  
 Ὡκεῖν στροφάλιγγι τινάσσεται ἀίσσουσα.  
 Ὡς δὲ καὶ ἐν στηθεσσι κίαυ ἠελλίζετο κοῦρης.16

In this description, Virgil, as usual, has much improved upon his original; and particularly in that circumstance, which is the most essential of all, that on which the fitness of the comparison depends, and which forms the hinge, as it were, upon which it turns, he has greatly surpassed the ancient author.

It appears, therefore, that in comparisons, the chief design of which is ornament or variety, the principal excellence results from the introduction of an image different in kind, but correspondent in some particular circumstances. There are, however, two capital imperfections to which this figure is sometimes liable: one, when objects too dissimilar, and dissimilar chiefly in the adjuncts or circumstances, are forced into comparison; the other, and not less common or important, though perhaps less adverted to, when the relation or resemblance is in general too exact and minute. The comparison in the one case is monstrous and whimsical; in the other it is grovelling and inanimate.

Examples innumerable in illustration of the present subject might be found in the sacred poetry; I shall, however, produce not more

15 Æn. viii. 28.

16 Argon. III. 754.

than two from Isaiah. The first from the historical narration of the confederacy between the Syrians and the Israelites against the kingdom of Judah, "which when it was told unto the king," says the prophet, "his heart was moved, and the hearts of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind."<sup>17</sup> The other is a poetical comparison, which is fuller and more diffuse than the custom of the Hebrews generally admits; the subject of correspondent application, however, is perfectly exact. The divine grace, and its effects, are compared with showers that fertilize the earth: an image which is uniformly appropriated to that purpose:

"Nam sicut descendit pluvia,  
 "Et nix de coelo;  
 "Atque illuc non revertitur,  
 "Donec irrigaverit tellurem,  
 "Eamque foecundaverit, et fecerit germinare;  
 "Ut det semen serenti et panem comedenti:  
 "Tale erit verbum quod ex meo ore prodit;  
 "Non ad me revertetur irritum,  
 "Quin effecerit quodcumque volui,  
 "Et feliciter transegerit quod ei mandavi."<sup>18</sup> (a)

More examples, and of superior elegance, may be found in the Song of Solomon:<sup>19</sup> it must not, indeed, be dissembled, that there are some in that poem, which are very reprehensible, on account of that general dissonance and fanciful agreement, which I have just remarked as a great imperfection attending the free use of this figure.<sup>20</sup> We must be cautious, however, lest in some cases we charge the poet with errors, which are in reality our own; since many of the objects which suggested these comparisons, are greatly obscured, and some of them removed entirely beyond the sphere of our knowledge by distance of time and place. It is the part of a wise man not rashly to condemn what we are able but partially to comprehend.

These three forms, according to which, for the sake of perspicuity, I have ventured to class comparisons in general, are however not so incompatible, that they may not occasionally meet, and be variously blended with each other. That indeed appears to be the most perfect comparison which combines all these different objects,

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<sup>17</sup> ISAI. vii. 2.

<sup>18</sup> ISAI. lv. 10, 11.

<sup>19</sup> See CANT. iv. 1—5, farther explained Lect. XXXI.

<sup>20</sup> See CANT. vii. 2—4.



and while it explains, serves at the same time to amplify and embellish the subject; and which possesses evidence and elevation, seasoned with elegance and variety. A more complete example is scarcely to be found than that passage, in which Job impeaches the infidelity and ingratitude of his friends, who in his adversity denied him those consolations of tenderness and sympathy, which in his prosperous state, and when he needed them not, they had lavished upon him: he compares them with streams, which, increased by the rains of winter, overflow their borders, and display for a little time a copious and majestic torrent; but with the first impulse of the solar beams are suddenly dried up, and leave those, who unfortunately wander through the deserts of Arabia, destitute of water, and perishing with thirst.<sup>21</sup>

Thus far of comparisons in general, and of their matter and intention: it remains to add a few words concerning the particular form and manner, in which the Hebrews usually exhibit them.

The Hebrews introduce comparisons more frequently perhaps than the poets of any other nation; but the brevity of them in general compensates for their abundance. The resemblance usually turns upon a single circumstance: that they explain in the most simple terms, rarely introducing any thing at all foreign to the purpose. The following example, therefore, is almost singular, since it is loaded with an extraordinary accession, or I might almost say a superfluity of adjuncts:

"Erunt sicut herba tectorum,

"Quae priusquam efflorescet exaruit:

"Qua non implet manum suam messor,

"Neque sinum suum qui manipulos colligit:

"Nec dicunt transeuntes,

"Benedictio Iehovae vobis adsit;<sup>22</sup>

"Benedicimus vobis in nomine Iehovae."<sup>23</sup>

The usual practice of the Hebrews is, indeed, very different from this: sometimes a single word, and commonly a very short sentence, comprehends the whole comparison. This peculiarity proceeds from the nature of the sententious style, which is always predominant in the Hebrew poetry, and, as I before remarked, consists in condensing and compressing every exuberance of expression, and rendering

<sup>21</sup> JOB vi. 15—20.

<sup>22</sup> A customary expression made use of in this business. See RUTH ii. 4.

<sup>23</sup> PSALM cxxix. 6—8. See also PSALM cxxxiii. 3.

it close and pointed. Thus, in the very parts in which other poets are copious and diffuse, the Hebrews, on the contrary, are brief, energetic, and animated; not gliding along in a smooth and equal stream, but with the inequality and impetuosity of a torrent. Thus their comparisons assume a peculiar form and appearance; for it is not so much their custom to dilate and embellish each particular image with a variety of adjuncts, as to heap together a number of parallel and analogous comparisons, all of which are expressed in a style of the utmost brevity and simplicity. Moses compares the celestial influence of the divine song, which he utters by the command of God, with showers which water the fields; and on an occasion when a Greek or Latin poet would have been contented with a single comparison, perhaps a little more diffused and diversified, he has introduced two pairs of similes exactly expressive of the same thing:

"Destillabit, ut pluvia, doctrina mea;

"Fluet, ut ros, mea oratio:

"Ut imbres tenuissimi in herbas;

"Ut densae guttulæ in gramina."<sup>24</sup>

The Psalmist makes use of the same form in the following:

"Fac, Deus mi, ut sint instar glumæ rotatæ,

"Instar stipulæ correptæ vento:

"Ut saltum comburit ignis,

"Ut montes incendit flamma;

"Sic tu illos tua tempestate persequere,

"Tuoque turbine consternatos age."<sup>25(c)</sup>

This is, indeed, the most common, but by no means the only form which this figure assumes in the Hebrew poetry: there is another, in which the comparison is more diffusively displayed; in which case the equal distribution of the sentences is still strictly adhered to; the image itself, however, is not repeated, but its attributes, which explain one another in two parallel sentences; as Moses has done in a comparison immediately following that which I just now quoted, in which he compares the care and paternal affection of the Deity for his people, with the natural tenderness of the eagle for its young:

"Ut Aquila excitat identidem nidum suum;

"Supper pullos suos sese motitat:

"Expandit pennas, assumit eos;

"Gestat eos super alam suam."<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> DEUT. xxxii. 2.

<sup>25</sup> PSALM. lxxxiii. 13—15.

<sup>26</sup> DEUT. xxxii. 11.

the same is observable also in that most elegant comparison of Job, which I formerly commended ; and which for this reason I shall now quote entire, by way of conclusion :

" Fratres mei perfide egerent sicut torrens,  
" Ut decursus torrentium illico transierunt ;  
" Qui turbidi ruunt a glacie ;  
" *In quos resoluta absconditur nix :*  
" Quo tempore aestu afficiuntur, pereunt ;  
" Cum calescit, excinduntur e loco suo :  
" Declinant catervae de via sua ;  
" Ascendunt in deserta et intereunt :  
" Respectant eos catervae Thamaeae ;  
" Turmae Sabaeae spem in eos intendunt :  
" Pudet illas fiduciae suae ;  
" Perveniunt illuc, et erubescunt." <sup>27</sup>(D)

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<sup>27</sup> JOB vi. 15—20.



## LECTURE XIII.

### OF THE PROSOPOPEIA, OR PERSONIFICATION

Two kinds of Personification: when a character is assigned to fictitious or inanimate objects, and when a probable speech is attributed to a real person—Of fictitious and inanimate characters; of real characters—The Prosopopeia of the mother of Sisera (in the song of Deborah) explained: also the triumphal song of the Israelites concerning the death of the king of Babylon, (in Isaiah) which consists altogether of this figure, and exhibits it in all its different forms.

THE last in order of those figures, which I proposed to treat of, as being most adapted to the parabolic style, is the Prosopopeia, or Personification.(A) Of this figure there are two kinds. One, when action and character are attributed to fictitious, irrational, or even inanimate objects; the other, when a probable but fictitious speech is assigned to a real character. The former evidently partakes of the nature of the metaphor, and is by far the boldest and most daring of that class of figures. Seasonably introduced, therefore, it has uncommon force and expression; and in no hands whatever is more successful in this respect than in those of the Hebrew writers: I may add also, that none more frequently or more freely introduce it.

In the first place then, with respect to fictitious characters, the Hebrews have this in common with other poets, that they frequently assign character and action to an abstract or general idea, and introduce it in a manner acting, and even speaking as upon a stage. In this, while they equal the most refined writers in elegance and grace, they greatly excel the most sublime in force and majesty. What, indeed, can be conceived apter, more beautiful, or more sublime, than that personification of Wisdom, which Solomon so frequently introduces? exhibiting her not only as the director of human life and morals, as the inventor of arts, as the dispenser of wealth, of honour, and of real felicity; but as the immortal offspring of the omnipotent Creator, and as the eternal associate in the divine counsels:

“ Cum Iehova coelos ornaret, ego adfui;

“ Cum super faciem abyssi circulum describeret:

“ Cum superne firmaret aethera;

“ Cum stabiliret abyssi fontes:

" Cum mari decretum suum ederet,  
 " Ne aquae transirent praescriptum limitem,  
 " Cum designaret telluris fundamenta :  
 " Tum aderam illi alumna,  
 " Et eram quotidianae deliciae,  
 " Coram illo ludebam iugiter :  
 " Ludebam in orbe terrarum eius,  
 " Et deliciae meae cum filiis hominum."<sup>1</sup>

How admirable is that celebrated personification of the divine attributes by the Psalmist? How just, elegant, and splendid does it appear, if applied only according to the literal sense, to the restoration of the Jewish nation from the Babylonish captivity? but if interpreted as relating to that sublimer, more sacred and mystical sense, which is not obscurely shadowed under the ostensible image, it is certainly uncommonly noble and elevated, mysterious and sublime :

" Misericordia et veritas sibi invicem occurrunt ;  
 " Iustitia et pax se mutuo osculantur."<sup>2</sup>

There are many passages of a similar kind, exquisitely imagined, and, from the boldness of the fiction, extremely forcible. Such is that in Habakkuk, of the Pestilence marching before *JEHOVAH* when he comes to vengeance : that in Job, in which Destruction and Death affirm of Wisdom, that her fame only had come to their ears : in fine (that I may not be tedious in quoting examples) that tremendous image in Isaiah, of Hades extending her throat, and opening her insatiable and immeasurable jaws.<sup>3</sup>

There is also another most beautiful species of personification, which originates from a well known Hebrew idiom, and on that account is very familiar to us ; I allude to that form of expression, by which the subject, attribute, accident, or effect of any thing is denominated the son. Hence in the Hebrew poetry, nations, regions, peoples, are brought upon the stage as it were in a female character :

" Descend and sit in the dust, O virgin, daughter of Babylon ;  
 " Sit on the bare ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans :  
 " For thou shalt no longer be called the tender and the delicate."<sup>4</sup>(B)

" Luget, sedetque sola humi, virgo Sionis filia :  
 " Flet nocte semper inquires, semper genis mandentibus ;  
 " Manusque tendit supplices, nec invenit solatia."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prov. viii. 27—31

<sup>2</sup> Psal. lxxxv. 11

<sup>3</sup> Hab. iii. 5. Job. xxviii. 22. Isai. v. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Isai. xlvii. 1, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Lam. i. 1, etc.

Unless we attend to this peculiar phraseology, such expressions as the "Sons of the bow and of the quiver" for arrows, will seem extremely harsh and unnatural; as well as that remarkable personification of Job, denoting the most miserable death, "The first-born of the progeny of death."<sup>6</sup>

The parabolic style no less elegantly assigns a character and action to inanimate objects than to abstract ideas. The holy prophets, moved with just indignation against the ungrateful people of God, "obtest the Heavens and the earth, and command universal nature to be silent. They plead their cause before the mountains, and the hills listen to their voice."<sup>7</sup> All is animated and informed with life, soul and passion:

"Laetetur coeli, et exaltet terra,  
 "Et edificant per gentes, Iehova regnat.  
 "Frenitum edat mare, et quod eo continetur;  
 "Orbis, et eius incolae:  
 "Palmas suas complodunt fluvii,  
 "Certatim montes in cantum prorumpunt:  
 "Coram Iehova, nam advenit,  
 "Nam advenit indicatum terram."  
 "Viderunt te aquae, o Deus;  
 "Viderunt te aquae, dolere corruptae sunt:  
 "Vocem suam edidit abyssus;  
 "Manus suas sublime extulit."<sup>8</sup>

And Job admirably in the same style:

"Num ire iubebis fulgura, et ibunt;  
 "Et dicent tibi, en praesto sumus!"<sup>9</sup>

With equal success they introduce objects, which have no existence in the order and economy of nature; though it must be confessed, that it is attended with much greater hazard of propriety; for to those, which are within the province of nature, we readily attribute a degree of life and sentiment. Of this the following dialogue in Jeremiah is an admirable specimen:

"Eheu! o ensis Iehovae, quousque non quiesces?  
 "Recipe te in vaginam, subeiste, et aile.  
 "Quomodo quiesceret, cum Iehovae ei mandata dederit?  
 "Ad Ascalonem et ad oram maritimam, illuc ei condixit."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Job. xli. 19. Lam. iii. 13. Job xviii. 13.

<sup>7</sup> Deut. xxxii. 1. Isai. i. 2. Mic. vi. 1.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Chron. xvi. 31. Psal. xcvi. 7, 8. Psal. xcvi. 13. Psal. lxxvii. 16. Habak. iii. 10.

<sup>9</sup> Job xxxviii. 35.

<sup>10</sup> Jer. xlvii. 6. 7.



The other kind of *prosopopœia*, to which I alluded in the former part of this lecture, is that, by which a probable but fictitious speech is assigned to a real person. As the former is calculated to excite admiration and approbation by its novelty, boldness, and variety; so the latter, from its near resemblance to real life, is possessed of great force, evidence, and authority.

It would be an infinite task to specify every instance in the sacred poems, which on this occasion might be referred to as worthy of notice; or to remark the easy, the natural, the bold and sudden personifications; the dignity, importance, and impassioned severity of the characters. It would be difficult to describe the energy of that eloquence which is attributed to *JEHOVAH* himself, and which appears so suitable in all respects to the Divine Majesty; or to display the force and beauty of the language which is so admirably and peculiarly adapted to each character; the probability of the fiction; and the excellence of the imitation. One example, therefore, must suffice for the present; one more perfect it is not possible to produce. It is expressive of the eager expectation of the mother of Sisera, from the inimitable ode of the prophetess Deborah.<sup>11</sup>

The first sentences exhibit a striking picture of maternal solicitude, both in words and actions; and of a mind suspended and agitated between hope and fear:

"Per fenestram prospexit et clamavit  
 "Mater Siserae per cancellos:  
 "Cur pudet currum eius venire?  
 "Cur morantur quadrigarum eius incessus?"

Immediately, impatient of his delay, she anticipates the consolations of her friends, and her mind being somewhat elevated, she boasts with all the levity of a fond female;

Vast in her hopes and giddy with success:  
 "Sapientes primariae eius foeminae certatim ei respondent;  
 "Imo ipsa sibi suos sermones illico reddit:  
 "Annon iam assequuntur, dividunt praedam?"

Let us now observe, how well adapted every sentiment, every word is to the character of the speaker. She takes no account of the slaughter of the enemy, of the valour and conduct of the conqueror, of the multitude of the captives, but

Burns with a female thirst of prey and spoils.

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<sup>11</sup> JUD. v. 28—30.

Nothing is omitted, which is calculated to attract and engage the passions of a vain and trifling woman, slaves, gold, and rich apparel. Nor is she satisfied with the bare enumeration of them ; she repeats, she amplifies, she heightens every circumstance ; she seems to have the very plunder in her immediate possession ; she pauses and contemplates every particular :

“ Annon iam assequantur, dividunt praedam ?

“ Ancillam, imo duas unicuique ancillas ?

“ Praedam versicolorem Siserae ?

“ Praedam versicolorem, acupictam ;

“ Coloratam, utrinque acupictam, collo exuvium ?”

To add to the beauty of this passage, there is also an uncommon neatness in the versification, great force, accuracy, and perspicuity in the diction, the utmost elegance in the repetitions, which, notwithstanding their apparent redundancy, are conducted with the most perfect brevity. In the end, the fatal disappointment of female hope and credulity, tacitly insinuated by the sudden and unexpected apostrophe,

“ Sic pereant omnes inimici tui, o Iehova !”

is expressed more forcibly by this very silence of the person who was just speaking, than it could possibly have been by all the powers of language.(c)

But whoever wishes to understand the full force and excellence of this figure, as well as the elegant use of it in the Hebrew ode, must apply to Isaiah, whom I do not scruple to pronounce the sublimest of poets. He will there find, in one short poem, examples of almost every form of the prosopopœia, and indeed of all that constitutes the sublime in composition. I trust it will not be thought unreasonable to refer immediately to the passage itself, and to remark a few of the principal excellencies.<sup>19</sup>

The prophet, after predicting the liberation of the Jews from their severe captivity in Babylon, and their restoration to their own country, introduces them as reciting a kind of triumphal song upon the fall of the Babylonish monarch, replete with imagery, and with the most elegant and animated personifications. A sudden exclamation, expressive of their joy and admiration on the unexpected revolution in their affairs, and the destruction of their tyrants, forms the exordium of the poem. The earth itself triumphs with the inhabi-

<sup>19</sup> ISAIA. xiv. 4—27.

tants thereof; the fir trees, and the cedars of Lebanon (under which images the parabolic style frequently delineates the kings and princes of the Gentiles) exult with joy, and persecute with contemptuous reproaches the humbled power of a ferocious enemy:

"Quiescit, tranquilla est tota tellus; erumpunt in cantum:

"Etiam abietes laetantur propter te, cedri Libani;

"Ex quo iacuisti, non ascendit in nos vastator."

This is followed by a bold and animated personification of Hades, or the infernal regions. Hades excites his inhabitants, the ghosts of princes, and the departed spirits of kings: they rise immediately from their seats, and proceed to meet the monarch of Babylon; they insult and deride him, and comfort themselves with the view of his calamity:

"Tunc etiam debilitatus es, ut nos? nostri similis factus es?

"Demissa est ad oreum superbia tua, strepitus cithararum tuarum?

"Subter te sternitur vermis, et tegumentum tuum lumbricus?"

Again, the Jewish people are the speakers, in an exclamation after the manner of a funeral lamentation, which indeed the whole form of this composition exactly imitates. The remarkable fall of this powerful monarch is thus beautifully illustrated:

"Quomodo decidisti de coelo, o Lucifer, fili Aurorae!

"Deturbatus es in terram, qui subegisti gentes!"

He himself is at length brought upon the stage, boasting in the most pompous terms of his own power, which furnishes the poet with an excellent opportunity of displaying the unparalleled misery of his downfall. Some persons are introduced, who find the dead carcass of the king of Babylon cast out and exposed; they attentively contemplate it, and at last scarcely know it to be his:

"Hiccinne vir ille, qui tremefecit terram, commovit regna?

"Qui orbem redegit in solitudinem, urbesque eius diruit?"

They reproach him with being denied the common rites of sepulture, on account of the cruelty and atrocity of his conduct; they execrate his name, his offspring, and their posterity. A solemn address, as of the Deity himself, closes the scene, and he denounces against the king of Babylon, his posterity, and even against the city, which was the seat of their cruelty, perpetual destruction, and confirms the immutability of his own counsels by the solemnity of an oath.

How forcible is this imagery, how diversified, how sublime! how



elevated the diction, the figures, the sentiments!—The Jewish nation, the cedars of Lebanon, the ghosts of departed kings, the Babylonish monarch, the travellers who find his corpse, and last of all, JAHNOAH himself, are the characters which support this beautiful lyric drama. One continued action is kept up, or rather a series of interesting actions are connected together in an incomparable whole: this, indeed, is the principal and distinguished excellence of the sublimer ode, and is displayed in its utmost perfection in this poem of Isaiah, which may be considered as one of the most ancient, and certainly the most finished species of that composition, which has been transmitted to us. The personifications here are frequent, yet not confused; bold, yet not improbable: a free, elevated, and truly divine spirit pervades the whole; nor is there any thing wanting in this ode to defeat its claim to the character of perfect beauty and sublimity. If, indeed, I may be indulged in the free declaration of my own sentiments on this occasion, I do not know a single instance in the whole compass of Greek and Roman poetry, which, in every excellence of composition, can be said to equal, or even to approach it.(v)

## LECTURE XIV.

### OF THE SUBLIME IN GENERAL, AND OF SUBLIMITY OF EXPRESSION IN PARTICULAR.

III. In what manner the word  $\text{גָּדוֹל}$  implies the idea of Sublimity—Sublimity of language and sentiment—On what account the poetic diction of the Hebrews, either considered in itself, or compared with prose composition, merits an appellation expressive of sublimity—The sublimity of the poetic diction arises from the passions—How far the poetic diction differs from prose among the Hebrews—Certain forms of poetic diction and construction exemplified from Job, Chap. iii

HAVING in the preceding lectures given my sentiments at large on the nature of the figurative style, on its use and application in poetry, and particularly in the poetry of the Hebrews; I proceed to treat of the Sublimity of the sacred poets; a subject which has been already illustrated by many examples quoted upon other occasions; but which, since we have admitted it as a third characteristic of the poetic style, now requires to be distinctly explained. We have already seen that this is implied in one of the senses of the word  $\text{גָּדוֹל}$ , it being expressive of power, or supreme authority, and when applied to style, seems particularly to intimate something eminent or energetic, excellent or important. This is certainly understood in the phrase “to take (or lift) up his parable;” that is, to express a great or lofty sentiment. The very first instance, in which the phrase occurs, will serve as an example in point. For in this manner Balaam “took up,” as our translation renders it, “his parable, and said:”

“Ex Aramaea me accessivit Balacus;

“Rex Moabitarum ex montibus Orientis:

“Veni, execrare mihi Iacobum;

“Et veni, detestare Israëlem.

“Quomodo maledicam, cui non maledixit Deus?

“Aut quomodo detestabor, quem non detestatus est Iehova?

“Nam e vertice rupium eum aspiciam,

“Et ex collibus eum contemplabor;

“En populum, qui seorsum habitabit,

“Neque sese gentibus annumerabit!

" Quis percensuit pulverem Iacobi ?

" Aut numerum vel quartae partis Israël ?

" Moriatur anima mea morte iustorum ;

" Et fit exitus meus illius instar !"<sup>1</sup>

Let us now consider, on what account this address of the prophet is entitled הַשְׁבָּחָה. The sentences are indeed accurately distributed in parallelisms, as may be discovered even in the translation, which has not entirely obscured the elegance of the arrangement : and compositions in this form, we have already remarked, are commonly classed among the proverbs and adages, which are properly called מִשְׁלֵי, though perhaps they contain nothing of a proverbial or didactic nature. But if we attentively consider this very passage, or others introduced by the same form of expression, we shall find, in all of them, either an extraordinary variety of figure and imagery ; or an elevation of style and sentiment ; or perhaps an union of all these excellencies ; which will induce us to conclude, that something more is meant by the term to which I am alluding than the bare merit of a sententious neatness. If again we examine the same passage in another point of view, we shall discover in it little or nothing of the figurative kind, at least according to our ideas, or according to that acceptation of the word הַשְׁבָּחָה which denotes figurative language ; there is evidently nothing in it of the mystical kind, nothing allegorical, no pomp of imagery, no comparison, and in fourteen verses but a single metaphor : as far, therefore, as figurative language is a characteristic of the parabolic style, this is no instance of it. We must then admit the word *parable*, when applied to this passage, to be expressive of those exalted sentiments, that spirit of sublimity, that energy and enthusiasm, with which the answer of the prophet is animated. By this example I wished to explain on what reasons I was induced to suppose that the term הַשְׁבָּחָה, as well from its proper power or meaning, as from its usual acceptation, involves an idea of sublimity ; and that the Hebrew poetry expresses in its very name and title, the particular quality in which it so greatly excels the poetry of all other nations.<sup>2</sup>

The word sublimity I wish in this place to be understood in its most extensive sense : I speak not merely of that sublimity, which exhibits great objects with a magnificent display of imagery and diction ; but that force of composition, whatever it be, which strikes and overpowers the mind, which excites the passions, and which ex-

<sup>1</sup> NUMB. xxiii. 7—10.

<sup>2</sup> See Lect. iv. Note A and E.



presses ideas at once with perspicuity and elevation ; not solicitous whether the language be plain or ornamented, refined or familiar ; in this use of the word I copy Longinus, the most accomplished author on this subject, whether we consider his precepts or his example.

The sublime consists either in language or sentiment, or more frequently in an union of both, since they reciprocally assist each other, and since there is a necessary and indissoluble connexion between them : this, however, will not prevent our considering them apart with convenience and advantage. The first object, therefore, which presents itself for our investigation, is, upon what grounds the poetic diction of the Hebrews, whether considered in itself, or in comparison with prose composition, is deserving of an appellation immediately expressive of sublimity.

The poetry of every language has a style and form of expression peculiar to itself ; forcible, magnificent, and sonorous ; the words pompous and energetic ; the composition singular and artificial ; the whole form and complexion different from what we meet with in common life, and frequently (as with a noble indignation) breaking down the boundaries by which the popular dialect is confined. The language of reason is cool, temperate, rather humble than elevated, well arranged and perspicuous, with an evident care and anxiety lest any thing should escape which might appear perplexed or obscure. The language of the passions is totally different : the conceptions burst out in a turbid stream, expressive in a manner of the internal conflict ; the more vehement break out in hasty confusion ; they catch (without search or study) whatever is impetuous, vivid, or energetic. In a word, reason speaks literally, the passions poetically. The mind, with whatever passion it be agitated, remains fixed upon the object that excited it ; and while it is earnest to display it, is not satisfied with a plain and exact description ; but adopts one agreeable to its own sensations, splendid or gloomy, jocund or unpleasant. For the passions are naturally inclined to amplification ; they wonderfully magnify and exaggerate whatever dwells upon the mind, and labour to express it in animated, bold, and magnificent terms. This they commonly effect by two different methods ; partly by illustrating the subject with splendid imagery, and partly by employing new and extraordinary forms of expression, which are indeed possessed of great force and efficacy in this respect especially, that they in some degree imitate or represent the present habit and state of the soul.

Hence those theories of rhetoricians, which they have so pompously detailed, attributing that to art, which above all things is due to nature alone :

"Format enim natura prius nos intus ad omnem  
"Fortunarum habitum : iuvat, aut impellit ad iram,  
"Aut ad humum moerore gravi deducit et angit ;  
"Post effert animi motus interprete lingua."<sup>3</sup>

A principle which pervades all poetry, may easily be conceived to prevail even in a high degree in the poetry of the Hebrews. Indeed we have already seen how daring these writers are in the selection of their imagery, how forcible in the application of it ; and what elegance, splendour, and sublimity they have by these means been enabled to infuse into their compositions. With respect to the diction also, we have had an opportunity of remarking the peculiar force and dignity of their poetic dialect ; as well as the artificial distribution of the sentences, which appears to have been originally closely connected with the metrical arrangement, though the latter be now totally lost. We are therefore in the next place to consider whether there be any other remarkable qualities in the poetical language of the Hebrews, which serve to distinguish it from prose composition.

It is impossible to conceive any thing more simple and unadorned than the common language of the Hebrews. It is plain, correct, chaste, and temperate ; the words are uncommon neither in their meaning nor application ; there is no appearance of study, nor even of the least attention to the harmony of the periods. The order of the words is generally regular and uniform. The verb is the first word in the sentence, the noun, which is the agent, immediately succeeds, and the other words follow in their natural order. Each circumstance is exhibited at a single effort, without the least perplexity or confusion of the different parts : and, what is remarkable, by the help of a simple particle, the whole is connected from the beginning to the end in a continued series, so that nothing appears inconsistent, abrupt, or confused. The whole composition, in fine, is disposed in such an order, and so connected by the continued succession of the different parts, as to demonstrate clearly the regular state of the author, and to exhibit the image of a sedate and tranquil mind. But in the Hebrew poetry the case is different, in part at least, if not in the whole. The free spirit is hurried along, and has

<sup>3</sup> HOR. Art. Poet. v. 108—12.



neither leisure nor inclination to descend to those minute and frigid attentions. Frequently, instead of disguising the secret feelings of the author, it lays them quite open to public view; and the veil being as it were suddenly removed, all the affections and emotions of the soul, its sudden impulses, its hasty sallies and irregularities, are conspicuously displayed.

Should the curious inquirer be desirous of more perfect information upon this subject, he may satisfy himself, I apprehend, with no great labour or difficulty. Let him take the book of Job; let him read the historical poem of that book; let him proceed to the metrical parts, and let him diligently attend to the first speech of Job. He will, I dare believe, confess, that, when arrived at the metrical part, he feels as if he were reading another language; and is surprised at a dissimilarity in the style of the two passages much greater than between that of Livy and Virgil, or even Herodotus and Homer. Nor indeed could the fact be otherwise, according to the nature of things; since in the latter passage the most exquisite pathos is displayed, such indeed as has not been exceeded, and scarcely equalled by any effort of the Muses. Not only the force, the beauty, the sublimity of the sentiments are unrivalled; but such is the character of the diction in general, so vivid is the expression, so interesting the assemblage of objects, so close and connected the sentences, so animated and passionate the whole arrangement, that the Hebrew literature itself contains nothing more poetical. The greater part of these beauties are so obvious, that they cannot possibly escape the eye of a diligent reader; there are some, however, which, depending chiefly upon the arrangement and construction, are of a more abstruse nature. It also sometimes happens, that those beauties which may be easily conceived, are very difficult to be explained: while we simply contemplate them, they appear sufficiently manifest; if we approach nearer, and attempt to touch and handle them, they vanish and escape. Since, however, it would not be consistent with my duty on the present occasion to pass them by totally unregarded, I shall rely, gentlemen, upon your accustomed candour, while I attempt to render, if possible, some of those elegancies more obvious and familiar.

The first thing that arrests the attention of the reader in this passage, is the violent sorrow of Job, which bursts forth on a sudden, and flows from his heart, where it had long been confined and suppressed:



"Pereat dies, nasciturus eram in eo (i. e. quo nasciturus eram);

"Et nox (quæ) dixit, conceptus est vir."<sup>4</sup>

Observe here the concise and abrupt form of the first verse; and in the second, the boldness of the figure, and the still more abrupt conclusion. Let the reader then consider, whether he could endure such a spirited, vehement, and perplexed form of expression in any prose composition; or even in verse, unless it were expressive of the deepest pathos.<sup>(A)</sup> He will nevertheless, I doubt not, acknowledge that the meaning of this sentence is extremely clear; so clear indeed, that if any person should attempt to make it more copious and explanatory, he would render it less expressive of the mind and feelings of the speaker. It happens fortunately that we have an opportunity of making the experiment upon this very sentiment. There is a passage of Jeremiah so exactly similar, that it might almost be imagined a direct imitation: the meaning is the same, nor is there any very great difference in the phraseology; but Jeremiah fills up the ellipses, smoothes and harmonizes the rough and uncouth language of Job, and dilates a short distich into two equal distichs, consisting of somewhat longer verses, which is the measure he commonly makes use of:

"Maledictus sit dies ille, in quo natus sum!

"Dies, quo peperit me mater mea, sit nefastus!

"Maledictus sit vir ille, qui nuntiavit patri meo,

"Dicens, natus est tibi filius mas, magno eum gaudio affectit."<sup>5</sup>

Thus it happens, that the imprecation of Jeremiah has more in it of complaint than of indignation; it is milder, softer, and more plaintive, peculiarly calculated to excite pity, in moving which the great excellence of this prophet consists: while that of Job is more adapted to strike us with terror than to excite our compassion.<sup>(B)</sup>

But to proceed. I shall not trouble you with a tedious discussion of those particulars which are sufficiently apparent; the crowded and abrupt sentences, which seem to have little connexion, bursting from the glowing bosom with matchless force and impetuosity; the bold and magnificent expressions, which the eloquence of indignation pours forth, four instances of which occur in the space of twice as many verses,<sup>6</sup> and which seem to be altogether poetical: two of them indeed are found continually in the poets, and in them only; the others are still more uncommon. Omitting these, there-

<sup>4</sup> Job iii. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Jer. xx. 14, 15.

<sup>6</sup> Ver. 4, 5, 7. תִּיטֵּן, זָלַתְתִּי, כִּסְתִּיתִּי, בִּלְטִיתִּי

fore, the object which at present seems more worthy of examination, is, that redundancy of expression, which in a few lines takes place of the former excessive conciseness :

"Nox illa—occupet illam caligo."<sup>7</sup>

In this also there is the strongest indication of passion, and a perturbed mind. He doubtless intended at first to express himself in this manner :

"Nox illa sit caligo!"<sup>8</sup>

But in the very act of uttering it, he suddenly catches at an expression, which appears more animated and energetic. I do not know that I can better illustrate this observation than by referring to a passage in Horace, in which a similar transition and redundancy falls from the indignant poet :

"Ille et—nefasto te posuit die

"Quicumque primum et sacrilega manu

"Produxit, arbos, in nepotum

"Perniciem opprobriumque pagi—

"Illum et parentis crediderim sui

"Fregisse cervicem, et penetralia

"Sparsisse nocturno cruore

"Hospitis ; ille venena Colcha,

"Et quicquid usquam concipitur nefas,

"Tractavit."

For undoubtedly the poet begun, as if he intended to pursue the subject in a regular order, and to finish the sentence in this form. "He who—planted thee ; he was accessory to the murder of his parents, and sprinkled his chambers with the blood of his guest ; he dealt in the poison of Cholchis," &c. But anger and vexation dissipated the order of his ideas, and destroyed the construction of this sentence. But should some officious grammarian take in hand the passage, (for this is a very diligent race of beings, and sometimes more than sufficiently exact and scrupulous) and attempt to restore it to its primitive purity and perfection, the whole grace and excellence of that beautiful exordium would be immediately annihilated, all the impetuosity and ardour would in a moment be extinguished.—But to return to Job :

"Ecce ! nox ista sit desolata !" <sup>10</sup>

He appears to have a direct picture or image of that night before his eyes, and to point it out with his finger. "The doors of my womb," for "the doors of my mother's womb,"<sup>11</sup> is an elliptical form of ex-

<sup>7</sup> Ver. 6.

<sup>8</sup> See ver. 4.

<sup>9</sup> Lib. II. Od. xiii.

<sup>10</sup> Ver. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Ver. 10.

pression, the meaning of which is easily cleared up, but which no person in a tranquil state of mind, and quite master of himself, would venture to employ. Not to detain you too long upon this subject, I shall produce only one passage more, which is about the conclusion of this animated speech :

- “ Quianam dabit aerumnoso lucem,  
 “ Et vitam amaris animae ?  
 “ Qui avidè expectant mortem, et nulla est ;  
 “ Eamque effoderent prae thesauris abditis :  
 “ Qui laetantur usque ad exultationem,  
 “ Triumpharent gaudio si invenirent sepulchrum :  
 “ Viro, cuius via e conspectu Dei remota est,  
 “ Et cui aditum ad se praeclusit Deus ?  
 “ Nam cibum meum perpetuo praeveniunt mea suspiria,  
 “ Et pariter cum potu effunduntur rugitus mei.”<sup>12</sup>

The whole composition of this passage is admirable, and deserves a minute attention. “ Wherefore should he give light to the miserable ?”—But who is the giver alluded to ? Certainly God himself, whom Job has indeed in his mind ; but it escaped his notice that no mention is made of him in the preceding lines. He seems to speak of the miserable in general, but by a violent and sudden transition he applies the whole to himself, “ But my groaning cometh like my daily food.” It is plain, therefore, that in all the preceding reflections he has himself only in view. He makes a transition from the singular to the plural, and back again, a remarkable amplification intervening, expressive of his desire of death, the force and boldness of which is incomparable ; at last, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he returns to the former subject, which he had apparently quitted, and resumes the detail of his own misery. From these observations I think it will be manifest, that the agitated and disordered state of the speaker’s mind is not more evidently demonstrated by a happy boldness of sentiment and imagery, and an uncommon force of language, than by the very form, conduct, and arrangement of the whole.

The peculiar property which I have laboured to demonstrate in this passage, will, I apprehend, be found to prevail as a characteristic of the Hebrew poetry, making due allowance for different subjects and circumstances ; I mean that vivid and ardent style, which is so well calculated to display the emotions and passions of the mind. Hence the poetry of the Hebrews abounds with phrases and idioms totally

<sup>12</sup> Ver. 20—24.



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unsuited to prose composition, and which frequently appear to us harsh and unusual, I had almost said unnatural and barbarous ; which, however, are destitute neither of meaning nor of force, were we but sufficiently informed to judge of their true application. It will, however, be worth our while, perhaps, to make the experiment on some other passages of this nature, and to try at least what can be done towards the further elucidation of this point.

## LECTURE XV.

### OF SUBLIMITY OF EXPRESSION.

The character of the poetic dialect further illustrated by examples of different kinds from the Song of Moses, Deut. xxxii.—The frequent and sudden transition from one person to another; its cause and effects—The use of the tenses in a manner quite different from common language: the reasons of this—The Hebrew language peculiar in this respect—The future is often spoken of in the perfect present, and the past in the future tense; the reason of the former easy to be explained; the latter is a matter of considerable difficulty, which neither the Commentators, the Translators, nor even the Grammarians have elucidated—Some examples of this, and the explanation of them—The frequent use of this form of construction may be considered as characteristic of the poetic dialect.

In order to demonstrate more completely the sublimity of the Hebrew poetry by comparison with prose, I referred the student of Hebrew to the book of Job, convinced that he would easily perceive, both in the matter and diction, a very considerable difference between the historical introduction of that book, and the metrical passages immediately succeeding. But lest these passages should be objected to, as improper instances for such a comparison, on the supposition that, although both of them were written entirely either in verse or prose, yet the different nature of the subjects would require a very different style; we shall now make the experiment on some other passages, and compare the manner of treating the same subject in verse and prose. The book of Deuteronomy will afford us a convenient instance; for Moses appears there in the character both of an orator and a poet. In the former character, he addresses a very solemn and interesting oration to the people of Israel,<sup>1</sup> exhorting them, by the most inviting promises, to the observance of the covenant, and dissuading them from the violation of it by threats of the most exemplary punishment: and for the purpose of impressing the same more forcibly on their minds, he afterwards, by the command of God, embellishes the subject with all the elegance of verse,<sup>2</sup> in a poem, which bears every mark of divine inspiration. In these two passages is displayed every excellence of which the Hebrew language is capable in both species of composition; all that is

<sup>1</sup> DEUT. xxviii. xxix. xxx. xxxi.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xxxii.

grand, forcible, and majestic, both in prose and verse ; From them too we may be enabled easily to comprehend the difference between the style of oratory among the Hebrews, and that of their poetry, not only in sentiment, but in the imagery, the arrangement, and the language. Whoever wishes, therefore, to satisfy himself concerning the true character and genius of the Hebrew poetry, I would advise carefully to compare the two passages, and I think he will soon discover that the former, though great, spirited, and abounding with ornament, is notwithstanding regular, copious, and diffuse ; that, with all its vehemence and impetuosity, it still preserves a smoothness, evenness, and uniformity throughout ; and that the latter, on the contrary, consists of sentences, pointed, energetic, concise, and splendid ; that the sentiments are truly elevated and sublime, the language bright and animated, the expression and phraseology uncommon ; while the mind of the poet never continues fixed to any single point, but glances continually from one object to another. These remarks are of such a nature, that the diligent reader will apprehend them better by experience and his own observation than by means of any commentary or explanation whatever. There are, however, one or two points which have attracted my notice in the perusal of this remarkable poem ; and as they are of general use and application, and may serve to elucidate many of the difficult passages of the Hebrew poetry, they appear to me not undeserving of a more particular examination.

Taking, therefore, this poem as an example, the first general observation, to which I would direct your attention, is the sudden and frequent change of the persons, and principally in the addresses or expostulations ; for enough has been said already concerning the introduction of different characters or personifications. In the exordium of this poem, Moses displays the truth and justice of Almighty God, most sacredly regarded in all his acts and counsels : whence he takes occasion to reprove the perfidy and wickedness of his ungrateful people ; at first as if his censure were only pointed at the absent ;

“ *Corrupti illi filios, non iam suos, ipsorum pravitas ;*”<sup>3</sup>

He then suddenly directs his discourse to themselves :

“ *Genus perversum et distortum !*

“ *Hocine ergo Iehovae rependetis,*

“ *Natio stulta atque insipiens ?*

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<sup>3</sup> Ver. 5, 6.



"Nonne ipse pater est tuus et redemptor tuus,  
"Ipse te fecit et formavit?"

After his indignation has somewhat subsided, adverting to a remoter period, he beautifully enlarges upon the indulgence, and more than paternal affection, continually manifested by Almighty God towards the Israelites, from the time when he first chose them for his peculiar people; and all this again without seeming directly to apply it to them. He afterwards admirably exaggerates the stupidity and barbarity of this ungrateful people, which exceeds that of the brutes themselves. Observe with what force the indignation of the prophet again breaks forth:

"At saginatus est Ieshurun et recalcitavit;  
"Saginatus fuisti, incrassatus, adipe obducto coopertus!  
"Et deseruit Deum creatorem suum,  
"Et rupem salutis suae vilipendit."

The abrupt transition in one short sentence to the Israelites, and back again, is wonderfully forcible and pointed, and excellently expressive of disgust and indignation. There is a passage of Virgil, which, though it be less animated, is certainly not unworthy of being compared with this of Moses; it is that in which, by an ingenious anastrophe, he upbraids the traitor with his crime, and at the same time exonerates the king from the imputation of cruelty:

"Haud procul inde citae Metium in diversa quadrigae  
"Distulerant at tu dictis Albano, maneres:  
"Raptabatque viri mendacis viscera Tullus  
"Per sylvam, et sparsi rorabant sanguine repes."<sup>4</sup>

I might proceed, and produce several examples in point from the same poem, and innumerable from other parts of the sacred writings, different from each other both in expression and form. These, however, are sufficient to demonstrate the force of this kind of composition in expressing the more vehement affections, and in marking those sudden emotions, which distract the mind and divide its attention. But whoever will attend with any diligence to the poetry of the Hebrews, will find that examples of this kind almost perpetually occur, and much more frequently, than could be endured in the poetry of the Greeks and Romans, or even in our own: he will find many of these instances not easy to be understood: the force and design of some of them, when separately considered, are indeed scarcely to be explained or even perfectly comprehended. The rea-

<sup>4</sup> Æt. viii. 662.

der will not, however, be warranted in concluding from this concession, that those very passages which are most obscure, are in themselves absurd, and that they possess no general force or effect in distinguishing the diction, in sustaining the poetic spirit, and in forming that peculiar character, which, however it may differ from what we are accustomed to, is in its kind altogether deserving of applause. In this case we ought to consider the proper genius and character of the Hebrew poetry. It is unconstrained, animated, bold, and fervid. The Orientals look upon the language of poetry as wholly distinct from that of common life, as calculated immediately for expressing the passions: if, therefore, it were to be reduced to the plain rule and order of reason, if every word and sentence were to be arranged with care and study, as if calculated for perspicuity alone, it would be no longer what they intended it, and to call it the language of passion would be the grossest of solecisms.

The other observation, to which I alluded as relating both to this poem and to the poetry of the Hebrews in general, is, that you there find a much more frequent change or variation of the tenses, than occurs in common language. The chief aim of such a transition, is, to render the subject of a narration or description more striking, and even to embody and give it a visible existence. Thus, in all languages, in prose as well as poetry, it is usual to speak of past as well as future events in the present tense, by which means whatever is described or expressed is in a manner brought immediately before our eyes; nor does the mind contemplate a distant object, by looking back to the past or forward to the future. But in this respect there is a great peculiarity in the Hebrew language. For the Hebrew verbs have no form for expressing the imperfect or indefinite of the present tense, or an action which now is performing: this is usually effected by a participle only, or by a verb substantive understood, neither of which are often made use of in such passages as these, nor indeed can be always conveniently admitted. They, therefore, take another method of attaining this end, and for the sake of clearness and precision, express future events by the past tense, or rather by the perfect present, as if they had actually taken place; and, on the contrary, past events by the future, as if immediately or speedily to happen, and only proceeding towards their completion. Of the first of these forms of construction, namely, the expressing of the future by the past tense, an instance which we just now quoted, will demonstrate both the nature and the effect.

Moses foreseeing, by the impulse of divine inspiration, the miserable neglect of the true worship, into which the people of Israel were universally to relapse, reprobates in the following terms the vices of that ungrateful people, as if they had been already committed in his immediate presence :

*"Corrupt illi filios, non iam suos, ipsorum pravitas :"*

Thus he speaks as if he were the actual witness of their depravity, and present at those impious rites, with which they were about to violate a religion divinely instituted through his means. Nothing can be more efficacious than this kind of anticipation to the clear, evident, and almost ocular demonstration of things. On this account it is a very common mode of expression in the prophetic writings ; and in this, as in every other excellence, Isaiah particularly challenges our highest admiration. Observe only with what exactness and perspicuity he has delineated the journey of Sennacherib towards Jerusalem, and the different stages of the army ; in-somuch that the light and evidence which the prophet throws upon the circumstances of the prediction, fall nothing short of the clearness and accuracy of a historical narration ;

*"Venit Aiatham ; transiit per Migronem ;*

*"Michmasae commisit impedimenta sua :*

*"Superarunt transitum ; Geba illis mansio ;*

*"Trepidavit Rama ; Gibea Sauli fugit :*

*"Ede eiulatum, o filia Gallimorum ;*

*"Attende Laisam versus, o afflicta Anathotha !*

*"Migravit Madmena ; Gebimenses confugerunt.*

*"Adhuc hodie Nobae ei subsistendum est ;*

*"Agitabit manum in montem filiae Sionis, collem Hierosolymae." 5(Δ)*

Thus the plague of locusts is denounced and described, as if it had already happened, by the prophet Joel :

*"Nam invasit terram meam natio*

*"Robusta atque innumerabilis :*

*"Vitem meam desolatam reddidit,*

*"Et ficum meam decorticavit :*

*"Penitus nudavit eam, et abiicit ;*

*"Dealbati sunt eius palmites.*

*"Vastatus est ager, luxit terra." 6*

The prophet is undoubtedly here speaking of a future event ; for, the very devastation, which, to strike the more forcibly on the mind, he has thus depicted as an event already past, is threatened by him

<sup>5</sup> ISAI. x. 28—32.

<sup>6</sup> JOEL i. 6, 7, 10, etc.



in the sequel, under another image, to be immediately inflicted, unless the people repent of their wickedness.<sup>7</sup> Thus far the Hebrew language differs not materially from others; those future actions or events which other writers, for the sake of force and clearness, express in the imperfect present, the Hebrews express in the perfect present with equal effect.

In another point, it must be confessed, they differ essentially from other writers, namely, when they intimate past events in the form of the future tense: and I must add, that this is a matter of considerable difficulty. If we resort to the translators and commentators, so far are they from affording any solution, that they do not so much as notice it, accommodating as much as possible the form of the tenses to the subject and context, and explaining it rather according to their own opinions, than according to the rules of grammar, or any fixed and established principles. If again we apply to the grammarians, we shall still find ourselves no less at a loss: they, indeed, remark the circumstance, but they neither explain the reason of it, nor yet are candid enough to make a fair confession of their own ignorance. They endeavour to confuse their disciples by the use of a Greek term, and have always at hand a sort of inexplicable and mysterious *enallage* or *change* of the tenses, with which, rather than say nothing, they attempt to evade a closer inquiry; as if the change were made by accident, and from no principle or motive: than which nothing can be conceived more absurd or impertinent. That these apparent anomalies, however, are not without their peculiar force and beauty, I have not a doubt; that many of them should cause difficulty and obscurity, considering the great antiquity of the Hebrew language, is not to be wondered at. Some light may notwithstanding be reflected upon the subject, by a careful attention to the state of the writer's mind, and by considering properly what ideas were likely to be prevalent in his imagination at the time of his writing. There is a remarkable instance of this form of construction in that very song of Moses, to which we have just been alluding. After mentioning the divine dispensation, by which the Israelites were distinguished as the chosen people of God, he proceeds to state with what love and tenderness the Almighty had cherished them, from the time in which he brought them from Egypt, led them by the hand through the wilderness, and, as it were,

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<sup>7</sup> JOEL ii.

carried them in his bosom : all these, though past events, are expressed in the future tense :

" *Inveniet eum in terra deserta,*

" *Et in vasta ciulanti solitudine :*

" *Circumdabit eum, edocebit eum ;*

" *Custodiet eum tanquam pupillam oculi sui.*"<sup>8</sup>

You will readily judge whether this passage can admit of any other explication, than that of Moses supposing himself present at the time when the Almighty selected the people of Israel for himself ; and thence, as from an eminence, contemplating the consequences of that dispensation. The case will be found similar in many other passages ; as, in particular, more than once in that historical psalm, which is inscribed with the name of Asaph. After the prophet has exposed the perfidy of the people, their refractory conduct almost in the very crisis of their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, he in a manner anticipates in his mind the clemency of God, and the repeated transgressions of the Israelites, and speaks of them as future events :

" *Ille tamen misericors condonabit iniquitatem, nec perdet ;*

" *Saepius avertet iram suam,*

" *Neque excitabit omnem suam indignationem.—*

" *Quomodo iam irritabunt eum in deserto,*

" *Discruciabunt in solitudine !*"<sup>9</sup>

The general disposition and arrangement of the hundred and fourth psalm affords a most elegant exemplification of this construction. For the prophet, instancing the greatness and wisdom of God in the constitution and preservation of the natural world, speaks of the actions and decrees of the Almighty in the present tense, as if he himself had been a witness when they were brought to light ; and displays their consequences and uses, and what are called the final causes, in the future tense, as if looking forward from the beginning through all future time.

But although these and some other passages will admit of this explanation, there are many to which it will not apply. In these the situation and state of the authors are not so much to be considered, as the peculiar nature or idiom of the language. For the Hebrews frequently make use of the future tense in such a manner, that it appears not to have relation to the present speaker, but to the person or thing which was last spoken of. Thus when any action is con-

<sup>8</sup> DEUT. xxxii. 10.

<sup>9</sup> PSAL. lxxviii. 38, 40.

nected with another action, or consequent to it; or when the same action is repeated or continued, when a person perseveres in the same action, or performs it with great earnestness or assiduity, this is all expressed as if it were future.<sup>10</sup> This form is therefore distinguished by the grammarians by the appellation עתיד, which is equivalent to prompt, expedite, or impending. Examples enough to this purpose might be produced from the passages which have been referred to on former occasions: for instance, from that most elegant *prosopopœia* of the mother of Sisera; from the allegory of the vine, which was brought out of Egypt; from the comparison founded on the maternal piety and solicitude of the eagle:<sup>11</sup> the form and manner of all which may be easily perceived by an attentive reader, but cannot be well explained by the most industrious commentator.

Now, if, as I have stated, this unusual form of construction be the effect either of some sudden emotion in the speaker, of some new and extraordinary state of mind; or if, on any other account, from the relation of the subject, or the genius of the language, it be possessed of some peculiar force or energy; it will obviously follow, that it must more frequently occur in poetry than in prose, since it is particularly adapted to the nature, the versatility, and variety of the former, and to the expression of any violent passion; and since it has but little affinity to that mildness and temperance of language, which proceeds in one uniform and even tenour. Thus if we attend diligently to the poetry of the Hebrews, and carefully remark its peculiar characteristics, we shall hardly find any circumstance, the regular and artificial conformation of the sentences excepted, which more evidently distinguishes it from the style of prose composition, than the singularity which is now under consideration. For though it be allowed, that this idiom is not so entirely inconsistent with prose, but that a few examples of it might be produced,<sup>12</sup> on the whole I am convinced, that the free and frequent use of it may be accounted as the certain characteristic of poetry.(B)

That the full force of these and other peculiarities, which serve to distinguish the poetical diction of the Hebrews, and to preserve that sublimity and splendour for which it is so remarkable, should be

<sup>10</sup> See 2 SAM. xii. 3.

<sup>11</sup> JUDG. v. 29. PS. lxxx. 9, 12, 14. DEUT. xxxii. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Hitherto I have only met with the following: JUDG. ii. 1. (See however Houbigant in loc.) and xxi. 25. 1 SAM. xxvii. 9, 11. 2 SAM. xii. 31. 1 KINGS xxi. 6. 1 CHRON. xi. 8. See also PETERS on JOB, page 202.



fully apparent from a few examples, is hardly to be expected ; nor did I flatter myself with any such expectation, when I entered upon this part of my subject. My intention was only to produce an instance or two, which were most likely to occur to those who enter upon this course of reading, and which appeared to demand particular attention. The perfect character and genius, the whole form, principles, and nature of the poetical diction and ornaments, can neither be comprehended in any minute or artificial precepts whatever, nor perhaps be reduced altogether to rule and method : the complete knowledge and perception of these are only to be attained by reading and investigation, united with acuteness of judgement and delicacy of taste.

## LECTURE XVI.

### OF SUBLIMITY OF SENTIMENT.

Sublimity of sentiment arises, either from elevation of mind, or from some vehement passion; in each, it is either natural, or the effect of divine inspiration—Elevation of mind is displayed in the greatness of the subject, the adjuncts, and the imagery—Examples from the descriptions of the Divine Majesty; of the works and attributes of the Deity; also from the display of the Divine Power in the form of Interrogation and Irony—The Hebrew poets attribute the human passions to the Deity without departing from sublimity; and that frequently when the imagery appears least consistent with the Divine Majesty; the reason of this.

If we consider the very intimate connexion, which on all occasions subsists between sentiment and language, it will perhaps appear, that the peculiar quality, of which we have just been treating, under the title of Sublimity of Expression, might ultimately be referred to that of Sentiment. In the strictest sense, however, Sublimity of Sentiment may be accounted a distinct quality, and may be said to proceed, either from a certain elevation of mind, and a happy boldness of conception; or from a strong impulse of the soul, when agitated by the more violent affections. The one is called by Longinus *Grandeur of Conception*, the other *Vehemence* or *Enthusiasm of Passion*. To each of these we must have recourse in the present disquisition, and in applying them to the sacred poets, I shall endeavour to detract nothing from the dignity of that inspiration, which proceeds from higher causes, while I allow to the genius of each writer his own peculiar excellence and accomplishments. I am indeed of opinion, that the Divine Spirit by no means takes such an entire possession of the mind of the prophet, as to subdue or extinguish the character and genius of the man: the natural powers of the mind are in general elevated and refined, they are neither eradicated nor totally obscured; and though the writings of Moses, of David, and of Isaiah, always bear the marks of a divine and celestial impulse, we may nevertheless plainly discover in them the particular characters of their respective authors.

That species of the sublime, which proceeds from a boldness of spirit, and an elevation of the soul, whether inherent in the author, or derived from a divine impulse and inspiration, is displayed first

in the greatness and sublimity of the subject itself; secondly, in the choice of the adjuncts or circumstances (by the importance and magnitude of which a degree of force and elevation is added to the description;) and lastly, in the splendour and magnificence of the imagery, by which the whole is illustrated. In all these the Hebrew writers have obtained an unrivalled preeminence. As far as respects the dignity and importance of the subject, they not only surpass all other writers, but even exceed the confines of human genius and intellect. The greatness, the power, the justice, the immensity of God; the infinite wisdom of his works and of his dispensations, are the subjects in which the Hebrew poetry is always conversant, and always excels. If we only consider with a common degree of candour how greatly inferior the poetry of all other nations appears, whenever it presumes to treat of these subjects; and how unequal to the dignity of the matter the highest conceptions of the human genius are found to be; we shall, I think, not only acknowledge the sublimity, but the divinity of that of the Hebrews. Nor does this greatness and elevation consist altogether in the subjects and sentiments, which, however expressed, would yet retain some part at least of their native force and dignity, but the manner in which these lofty ideas are arranged, and the embellishments of description with which they abound, claim our warmest admiration: and this, whether we regard the adjuncts or circumstances, which are selected with so much judgement as uniformly to contribute to the sublimity of the principal subject; or the amplitude of that imagery, which represents objects the most remote from human apprehension in such enchanting colours, that, although debased by human painting, they still retain their genuine sanctity and excellence. Since, therefore, the sublimity of the sacred poets has been already exemplified in a variety of instances, it will probably be sufficient, in addition to these, to produce a few examples as illustrations of these remarks, chiefly taken from those parts of Scripture, in which a delineation of the Divine Majesty is attempted.

In the first place then let me recal to your remembrance the solemnity and magnificence with which the power of God in the creation of the universe, is depicted. And here, I cannot possibly overlook that passage of the sacred historian, which has been so frequently commended, in which the importance of the circumstance and the greatness of the idea (the human mind cannot indeed well conceive a greater) is no less remarkable than the expressive brevity



and simplicity of the language :—" And God said, Let there be light, and there was light."<sup>1</sup> The more words you would accumulate upon this thought, the more you would detract from the sublimity of it : for the understanding quickly comprehends the Divine power from the effect, and perhaps most completely, when it is not attempted to be explained ; the perception in that case is the more vivid, inas-much as it seems to proceed from the proper action and energy of the mind itself. The prophets have also depicted the same concep-tion in poetical language, and with no less force and magnificence of expression. The whole creation is summoned forth to celebrate the praise of the Almighty :

" *Laudent nomen Iehovae ;*

" *Nam ille iussit, et creatae sunt.*"<sup>2</sup>

And in another place :

" *Nam ille dixit, et fuit ;*

" *Ille iussit, et constitit.*"<sup>3</sup>

The same subject is frequently treated more diffusely, many circum-stances being added, and a variety of imagery introduced for the purpose of illustration. Whether this be executed in a manner suit-able to the greatness and dignity of the subject, may be easily deter-mined by a few examples :

" *Ubinam fuisti cum fundarem terram ?*

" *Indica, si intelligentia polles.*

" *Quis disposuit mensuras eius, quandoquidem nôsti ;*

" *Aut quis super eam extendit lineam ?*

" *Quonam demersæ incumbunt bases eius ;*

" *Aut quis posuit lapidem eius angularem ?*

" *Quum simul ovarent stellae matutinae ;*

" *Unaque clangerent omnes filii Dei,*

" *Et foribus occlusit mare,*

" *Cum erumperet, ex utero exiret :*

" *Cum involverem illud indumento nubis,*

" *Et fascia densae caliginis :*

" *Et diffringerem illi decretum alveum,*

" *Poneremque repagula et valvas ;*

" *Diceremque, huc usque veni, nec progreditor ;*

" *Et hic obstaculum esto tuorum fluctuum superbiae.*"<sup>4</sup>

" *Quis mensus est pugillo suo aquas ;*

" *Et coelos palma aptavit ;*

" *Et comprehendit triente pulverem terrae ?*

" *Et ponderavit trutina montes,*

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 3.    <sup>2</sup> PsAL. cxlviii. 5.    <sup>3</sup> PsAL. xxxiii. 9.    <sup>4</sup> Job xxxviii. 4—11.

" Et colles bilance?  
 " Attollite in sublime vestros oculos,  
 " Et contemplantini quis creavit ista :  
 " Qui educit numero exercitum eorum,  
 " Eaque omnia nominatim appellat ;  
 " Præ magnitudine virium et robore potentiae, ne unum deest."<sup>5</sup>(A)

In these examples, the power and wisdom of the Deity, as demonstrated in the constitution and government of the natural world, you see have suggested a variety of circumstances, a splendid assemblage of imagery, of which it is a sufficient commendation to say, the whole is not unworthy the greatness of the subject. The case is, however, materially different, when the attributes of God are considered in themselves simply and abstractedly, with no illustration or amplification from their operations and effects. Here the human mind is absorbed, overwhelmed as it were in a boundless vortex, and studies in vain for an expedient to extricate itself. But the greatness of the subject may be justly estimated by its difficulty ; and while the imagination labours to comprehend what is beyond its powers, this very labour itself, and these ineffectual endeavours, sufficiently demonstrate the immensity and sublimity of the object. On this account the following passage is truly sublime. Here the mind seems to exert its utmost faculties in vain to grasp an object, whose unparalleled magnitude mocks its feeble endeavours ; and to this end it employs the grandest imagery that universal nature can suggest, and yet this imagery, however great, proves totally inadequate to the purpose :

" O Iehova, ad coelos pertingit benignitas tua ;  
 " Veritas tua, usque ad nubes :  
 " Iustitia tua instar montium validorum ;  
 " Iudicia tua Abyssus magna !" <sup>6</sup>

But nothing of this kind is nobler or more majestic, than when a description is carried on by a kind of continued negation ; when a number of great and sublime ideas are collected, which, on a comparison with the object, are found infinitely inferior and inadequate. Thus the boundaries are gradually extended on every side, and at length totally removed ; the mind is insensibly led on towards infinity, and is struck with inexpressible admiration, with a pleasing awe, when it first finds itself expatiating in that immense expanse. There are many such examples in the sacred poetry, one or two of which will probably enable you to recollect the rest.

<sup>5</sup> ISA. xl. 12 and 26.

<sup>6</sup> PSAL. xxxvi. 6, 7.

- "Numquid Dei intima pervestigabis?  
 "An invenies etiam perfectionem omnipotentis?  
 "Altitudines coelorum! quid ages?  
 "Orco profundior; quid cognosces!  
 "Mensura eius terra longior,  
 "Et latior est mari."<sup>7</sup>  
 "Quo discedam a spiritu tuo;  
 "Et quo a facie tua fugiam?  
 "Si ascendam coelos, ibi tu;  
 "Et in orco cubem, ecce te!  
 "Fugam capiam auroram versus;  
 "Habitem in extremitate maris occidui:  
 "Etiam illic manus tua ducet me;  
 "Et apprehenderet me dextera tua."<sup>8(b)</sup>

Here we find the idea of infinity perfectly expressed, though it be perhaps the most difficult of all ideas to impress upon the mind: for when simply and abstractedly mentioned, without the assistance and illustration of any circumstances whatever, it almost wholly evades the power of the human understanding. The sacred writers have, therefore, recourse to description, amplification, and imagery, by which they give substance and solidity to what is in itself a subtile and unsubstantial phantom; and render an ideal shadow the object of our senses. They conduct us through all the dimensions of space, length, breadth, and height: these they do not describe in general or indefinite terms; they apply to them an actual line and measure, and that the most extensive which all nature can supply, or which the mind is indeed able to comprehend. When the intellect is carried beyond these limits, there is nothing substantial upon which it can rest; it wanders through every part, and when it has compassed the boundaries of creation, it imperceptibly glides into the void of infinity: whose vast and formless extent, when displayed to the mind of man in the forcible manner so happily attained by the Hebrew writers, impresses it with the sublimest and most awful sensations, and fills it with a mixture of admiration and terror.

That more vehement species of negation or affirmation, which assumes the confident form of interrogation, is admirably calculated to impress the mind with a very forcible idea of Divine power. This also frequently occurs in the sacred poetry:

- "Hoc est decretum de omni terra consilium,  
 "Et haec est manus extensa in omnes gentes:

<sup>7</sup> Jon xi. 7—9.

<sup>8</sup> PSAL. cxxxix. 7—10.



" Nam Iehova exercituum decrevit, et quis irritum faciet ?

" Et ipse est manus quæ extenditur, et quis eam avertet ?"<sup>9</sup>

" An ille dixit, et non faciet ?

" An locutus est, et non effectum dabit ?"<sup>10</sup>

Nor is that ironical kind of concession, which is sometimes put into the mouth of the Supreme Being, less energetic ; the following passage is an admirable instance :

" Orna te, æge, magnificentia et celsitudine ;

" Et indue maiestatem et gloriam :

" Effunde quaquaversum æstus iræ tuæ ;

" Et aspectu tuo omnem elatum, deprime,

" Aspice omnem elatum, prosterne eum ;

" Et contere impios in vestigio suo :

" Obrue eos in pulvere pariter ;

" Involve eorum vultus, et in obscurum demerge.

" Tum etiam ego tibi confitebor ;

" Cum tibi salutem præstiterit dextera tua."<sup>11</sup>

When the Divine Omnipotence is opposed to human infirmity, the one is proportionably magnified as the other is diminished by the contrast. The monstrous absurdity of a comparison between things extremely unequal, the more forcibly serves to demonstrate that inequality, and sets them at an infinite distance from each other.

Since, however, the sacred poets were under the necessity of speaking of God in a manner adapted to human conceptions, and of attributing to him the actions, the passions, the faculties of man ; how can they be supposed ever to have depicted the Divine Majesty in terms at all becoming the greatness of the subject ? And are they not in this case more likely to disgrace and degrade it ? May not that censure be applied to them, which Longinus so deservedly applies to Homer, that he turned his gods into men, and even debased them beneath the standard of humanity ?—The case is, however, materially different : Homer, and the other heathen poets, relate facts of their deities, which, though impious and absurd, when literally understood, are scarcely, or at all intelligible in an allegorical sense, and can by no means be reduced to an interpretation strictly figurative.<sup>12</sup> On the contrary, in the delineation of the Divine nature, the sacred poets do indeed, in conformity to the weakness of the human understanding, employ terrestrial imagery ; but it is in such a manner, that the attributes which are borrowed from human

<sup>9</sup> ISAÏ. xiv. 26, 27.

<sup>10</sup> NUMB. xxiii. 19.

<sup>11</sup> JOB xl. 10—14.

<sup>12</sup> See FABRIC. Biblioth. Grec. L. v. c. 26. Vol. viii. p. 526.

nature and human action, can never in a literal sense be applied to the Divinity. The understanding is continually referred from the shadow to the reality; nor can it rest satisfied with the bare literal application, but is naturally directed to investigate that quality in the Divine nature, which appears to be analogous to the image. This, if I am not mistaken, will supply us with a reason not very obvious, of a very observable effect in the Hebrew writings, namely, why, among those sensible images that are applied to the Deity, those principally, which in a literal sense would seem most remote from the object, and most unworthy of the Divine Majesty, are nevertheless, when used metaphorically, or in the way of comparison, by far the most sublime. That imagery, for instance, which is taken from the parts and members of the human body, is found to be much nobler and more magnificent in its effect, than that which is taken from the passions of the mind; and that, which is taken from the animal creation, frequently exceeds in sublimity that which the nature of man has suggested. For such is our ignorance and blindness in contemplating the Divine nature, that we can by no means attain to a simple and pure idea of it: we necessarily mingle something of the human with the divine: the grosser animal properties, therefore, we easily distinguish and separate, but it is with the utmost difficulty that we can preserve the rational, and even some of the properties of the sensitive, soul perfectly distinct. Hence it is, that in those figurative expressions derived from the nobler and more excellent qualities of human nature, when applied to the Almighty, we frequently acquiesce, as if they were in strict literal propriety to be attributed to him: on the contrary, our understanding immediately rejects the literal sense of those which seem quite inconsistent with the Divine Being, and derived from an ignoble source: and, while it pursues the analogy, it constantly rises to a contemplation, which, though obscure, is yet grand and magnificent. Let us observe, whether this observation will apply to the following passages, in which the psalmist ascribes to God the resentment commonly experienced by a human creature for an injury unexpectedly received: there appears in the image nothing to excite our admiration, nothing particularly sublime:

*"Audivit Deus, et ira exarsit;*

*"Et Israël cum summo fastidio reiecit."*<sup>13</sup>

But when, a little after, the same subject is depicted in figurative

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<sup>13</sup> PSAL. lxxviii. 59.

terms, derived from much grosser objects, and applied in a still more daring manner, nothing can be more sublime :

" *Tum experfactus est Dominus veluti ex somno ;*

" *Tanquam Athleta prae vino in clamorem erumpens.*"<sup>14</sup>

On the same principle the sublimity of those passages is founded, in which the image is taken from the roaring of a lion, the clamour of rustic labourers, and the rage of wild beasts :

" *Ex alto rugiet Iehova ;*

" *Et ex sacrosancto habitaculo edet vocem :*

" *Horrendum rugiet super sedem suam ;*

" *Edet celeusma sicut calcantes uvas.*"<sup>15</sup>

" *Et ero illis instar leonis ;*

" *Sicut pardus iuxta viam insidiabor ;*

" *Occurram illis ut ursæ orbata,*

" *Et discerpam eorum præcordia.*"<sup>16</sup>

From ideas, which in themselves appear coarse, unsuitable, and totally unworthy of so great an object, the mind naturally recedes, and passes suddenly to the contemplation of the object itself, and of its inherent magnitude and importance.

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<sup>14</sup> PSAL. lxxviii. 65.

<sup>15</sup> JER. xxv. 30.

<sup>16</sup> HOS. xiii. 7, 8.



## LECTURE XVII.

### OF THE SUBLIME OF PASSION.

Sublimity of sentiment as arising from the vehement affections of the mind—What is commonly called enthusiasm is the natural effect of passion; the true enthusiasm arises from the impulse of the Divine Spirit, and is peculiar to the sacred poets—The principal force of poetry is displayed in the expression of passion: in exciting the passions poetry best achieves its purpose, whether it be utility or pleasure—How the passions are excited to the purpose of utility; how to that of pleasure—The difference and connexion between the pathetic and the sublime—That sublimity, which in the sacred poetry proceeds from the imitation of the passions of admiration, of joy, indignation, grief, and terror; illustrated by examples.

WE have agreed with Longinus, that a violent agitation of the mind, or impetuosity of passion, constitutes another source of the sublime: he calls it “the vehemence and enthusiasm of passion.” It will be proper, therefore, in the next place, to consider the nature of this enthusiasm; the principles on which the power of exciting or of imitating the passions in poetry may be supposed to depend; and what affinity subsists between passion and sublimity.

The language of poetry I have more than once described as the effect of mental emotion. Poetry itself is indebted for its origin, character, complexion, emphasis, and application, to the effects which are produced upon the mind and body, upon the imagination, the senses, the voice, and respiration, by the agitation of passion. Every affection of the human soul, while it rages with violence, is a momentary phrenzy. When therefore a poet is able by the force of genius, or rather of imagination, to conceive any emotion of the mind so perfectly as to transfer to his own feelings the instinctive passion of another, and, agreeably to the nature of the subject, to express it in all its vigour, such a one, according to a common mode of speaking, may be said to possess the true poetic enthusiasm,<sup>1</sup> or, as the ancients would have expressed it, “to be inspired; full of the God:” not however implying, that their ardour of mind was impart-

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<sup>1</sup> ARISTOTLE expresses it *μανικόν* (insane,) PLATO *εκρηγορα* (out of their common senses,) *εὐθεῖον* (inspired by a God,) *εὐθουσιαστικόν* (enthusiastic.)

ed by the gods, but that this ecstatic impulse became the God of the moment.<sup>2</sup>

This species of enthusiasm I should distinguish by the term *natural*, were it not that I should seem to connect things which are really different and repugnant to each other; the true and genuine enthusiasm, that which alone is deserving of the name, that I mean with which the sublimer poetry of the Hebrews, and particularly the prophetic, is animated, is certainly widely different in its nature, and boasts a much higher origin.

As poetry, however, derives its very existence from the more vehement emotions of the mind, so its greatest energy is displayed in the expression of them; and by exciting the passions it more effectually attains its end.

Poetry is said to consist in imitation: whatever the human mind is able to conceive, it is the province of poetry to imitate; things, places, appearances natural and artificial, actions, passions, manners and customs; and since the human intellect is naturally delighted with every species of imitation, that species in particular, which exhibits its own image, which displays and depicts those impulses, inflections, perturbations, and secret emotions, which it perceives and knows in itself, can scarcely fail to astonish and to delight above every other. The delicacy and difficulty of this kind of imitation are among its principal commendations; for to effect that which appears almost impossible, naturally excites our admiration. The understanding slowly perceives the accuracy of the description in all other subjects, and their agreement to their archetypes, as being obliged to compare them by the aid and through the uncertain medium, as it were, of the memory: but when a passion is expressed, the object is clear and distinct at once; the mind is immediately conscious of itself and its own emotions; it feels and suffers in itself a sensation, either the same or similar to that which is described. Hence that sublimity, which arises from the vehement agitation of the passions, and the imitation of them, possesses a superior influence over the human mind; whatever is exhibited to it from without, may well be supposed to move and agitate it less than what it internally perceives, of the magnitude and force of which it is previously conscious.

And as the imitation or delineation of the passions is the most

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<sup>2</sup> Nisus ait, Dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt,  
Euryale? an sua cuique deus fit dira cupido? *Æneid.* ix. 184.

perfect production of poetry, so by exciting them it most completely effects its purpose. The intent of poetry is to profit while it entertains us; and the agitation of the passions, by the force of imitation, is in the highest degree both useful and pleasant.

This method of exciting the passions is, in the first place, useful, when properly and lawfully exercised; that is, when these passions are directed to their proper end, and rendered subservient to the dictates of nature and truth; when an aversion to evil, and a love of goodness is excited; and if the poet deviate on any occasion from this great end and aim, he is guilty of a most scandalous abuse and perversion of his art. For the passions and affections are the elements and principles of human action; they are all in themselves good, useful, and virtuous; and, when fairly and naturally employed, not only lead to useful ends and purposes, but actually prompt and stimulate to virtue. It is the office of poetry to incite, to direct, to temper the passions, and not to extinguish them. It professes to exercise, to amend, to discipline the affections: it is this which is strictly meant by Aristotle, when he speaks of the *pruning of the passions*, though certain commentators have strangely perverted his meaning.

But this operation on the passions is also more immediately useful, because it is productive of pleasure. Every emotion of the mind, (not excepting even those which in themselves are allied to pain) when excited through the agency of the imitative arts, is ever accompanied with an exquisite sensation of pleasure. This arises partly from the contemplation of the imitation itself; partly from the consciousness of our own felicity, when compared with the miseries of others; but principally from the moral sense. Nature has endued man with a certain social and generous spirit; and commands him not to confine his cares to himself alone, but to extend them to all his fellow creatures; to look upon nothing which relates to mankind as foreign to himself. Thus "to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep;" to love and to respect piety and benevolence; to cherish and retain an indignant hatred of cruelty and injustice; that is, to obey the dictates of nature; is right, is honest, is becoming, is pleasant.

The sublime and the pathetic are intrinsically very different; and yet have in some respects a kind of affinity or connexion. The pathetic includes the passions which we feel, and those which we excite. Some passions may be expressed without any thing of the



sublime ; the sublime also may exist, where no passion is directly expressed ; there is however no sublimity where no passion is excited. That sensation of sublimity, which arises from the greatness of the thoughts and imagery, has admiration for its basis, and that for the most part connected with joy, love, hatred, or fear ; and this I think is evident from the instances which were so lately under our consideration.

How much the sacred poetry of the Hebrews excels in exciting the passions, and in directing them to their noblest end and aim ; how it exercises them upon their proper objects ; how it strikes and fires the admiration by the contemplation of the Divine Majesty ; and, forcing the affections of love, hope, and joy, from unworthy and terrestrial objects, elevates them to the pursuit of the supreme good : How it also stimulates those of grief, hatred, and fear, which are usually employed upon the trifling miseries of this life to the abhorrence of the supreme evil, is a subject which at present wants no illustration, and which, though not unconnected with sublimity in a general view, would be improperly introduced in this place. For we are not at present treating of the general effects of sublimity on the passions ; but of that species of the sublime which proceeds from vehement emotions of the mind, and from the imitation or representation of passion.

Here indeed a spacious field presents itself to our view : for by far the greater part of the sacred poetry is little else than a continued imitation of the different passions. What in reality forms the substance and subject of most of these poems but the passion of admiration, excited by the consideration of the Divine power and majesty ; the passion of joy, from the sense of the Divine favour, and the prosperous issue of events ; the passion of resentment and indignation against the contemners of God ; of grief, from the consciousness of sin ; and terror, from the apprehension of the Divine judgments ? Of all these, and if there be any emotions of the mind beyond these, exquisite examples may be found in the book of Job, in the Psalms, in the Canticles, and in every part of the prophetic writings. On this account my principal difficulty will not be the selection of excellent and proper instances, but the explaining of those which spontaneously occur, without a considerable diminution of their intrinsic sublimity.(A)

Admiration, as it is ever the concomitant, so it is frequently the efficient cause of sublimity. It produces great and magnificent con-

ceptions and sentiments, and expresses them in language bold and elevated, in sentences concise, abrupt, and energetic.

"Iehova regnat; contremiscant populi:

"Cherubis insidet; commoveatur tellus."<sup>3</sup>

"Vox Iehovae super aquas;

"Deus gloriae intonat;

"Iehova super aquas validas.

"Vox Iehovae potens;

"Vox Iehovae plena majestatis."<sup>4</sup>

"Quis tui similis inter Deos, Iehova!

"Quis tui similis, verendus sanctitate!

"Terribilis laudum, faciens mirabilia!

"Extendisti dextram, absorbet eos tellus."<sup>5</sup>

Joy is more elevated, and exults in a bolder strain. It produces great sentiments and conceptions; seizes upon the most splendid imagery, and adorns it with the most animated language; nor does it hesitate to risk the most daring and unusual figures. In the Song of Moses, in the Thanksgiving of Deborah and Barak, what sublimity do we find, in sentiment, in language, in the general turn of the expression! But nothing can excel in this respect that noble exultation of universal nature in the Psalm which has been so often commended, where the whole animated and inanimate creation unite in the praises of their Maker. Poetry here seems to assume the highest tone of triumph and exultation, and to revel, if I may so express myself, in all the extravagance of joy:

"Dicite, regnat Deus omnipotens;

"Dicite populis, ipse Iehova

"Posuit stabilis moenia mundi,

"Rerum validas torquet habenas.

"Coeli exultent; concinat aether;

"Resonet cantu conscia tellus;

"Resonent sylvae; resonent montes;

"Gement palmis flumina plausum;

"Fremitu laeto reboet pontus:

"Psallite, clangite, quaeque patentes

"Colitis terras, quaeque profundum.

"Advenit, advenit ipse Iehova,

"Regat ut populos legibus aequis;

"Totum numine temperet orbem."<sup>6</sup>

Nothing, however, can be greater or more magnificent than the representation of anger and indignation, particularly when the di-

<sup>3</sup> PSAL. xcix. 1.

<sup>4</sup> PSAL. xxix. 3, 4.

<sup>5</sup> EXOD. xv. 11, 12.

<sup>6</sup> PSAL. xcvi. 10—13, and xcvi. 7—9.

vine wrath is displayed. Of this the whole of the prophetic song of Moses affords an incomparable specimen. I have formerly produced from it some instances of a different kind; nor ought the following to be denied a place in these Lectures.

"Nam manum meam ad coelos attollo  
 "Et dico, ut ego in aeternum vivo,  
 "Ita acuam gladii mei fulgur,  
 "Et manus mea arripiet arma iudicii;  
 "Hostibus meis ultionem reddam,  
 "Eisque qui me oderunt rependam:  
 "Inebriabo sagittas meas sanguine,  
 "Et gladius meus devorabit carnes,  
 "Sanguine confossorum captorumque,  
 "De capite capillato inimicorum."<sup>7</sup>

Nor is Isaiah less daring on a similar subject:

"Nam dies ultionis in corde meo est,  
 "Et annus quo meos redimam venit:  
 "Et circumspexi, neque erat adiutor;  
 "Et obstupui, neque enim erat sustentator:  
 "Tum mihi salutem praestitit brachium meum,  
 "Et indignatio mea ipsa me sustentavit:  
 "Et conculcavi populos in ira mea,  
 "Et in aestu meo ebrios et attonitos reddidi,  
 "Et caedem eorum derivavi in terram."<sup>8(a)</sup>

The display of the fury and threats of the enemy, by which Moses finely exaggerates the horror of their unexpected ruin, is also wonderfully sublime:

"Dixerat hostis, persequar, adsequar;  
 "Dividam spolia, exsaturabitur anima mea;  
 "Stringam gladium, excindet eos manus mea:  
 "Spiritu tuo flavisti; operuit eos mare."<sup>9</sup>

Grief is generally abject and humble, less apt to assimilate with the sublime; but when it becomes excessive, and predominates in the mind, it rises to a bolder tone, and becomes heated to fury and madness. We have a fine example of this from the hand of Jeremiah, when he exaggerates the miseries of Sion:

"Arcum suum hostili more intendit; dextram firmavit velut inimicus;  
 "In tentoria filiae Sionis iram suam instar ignis effudit."<sup>10</sup>

But nothing of this kind can equal the grief of Job, which is acute, vehement, fervid; always in the deepest afflictions breathing an animated and lofty strain;

<sup>7</sup> DEUT. xxxii. 40—42. <sup>8</sup> ISAI. lxiii. 4—6. <sup>9</sup> EXOD. xv. 9, 10. <sup>10</sup> LAM. ii. 4.



"Aestuat ingens  
 "Uno in corde pudor, luctusque, et conscia virtus."  
 "Ira eius discerpit me, et hostili odio prosequitur;  
 "Dentibus in me infrendit,  
 "Hostis meus acuit contra me oculos suos.  
 "Fauces suas contra me distendunt;  
 "Maxillas meas contumeliose percutiunt;  
 "Pariter super me sese exsaturant.  
 "Constrictum me Deus iniquo tradidit,  
 "Et in manus impiorum me praecipitavit.  
 "Tranquillus eram, et me penitus contrivit;  
 "Et cervice prehensum minutatim diffregit;  
 "Ac me sibi pro scopo constituit.  
 "Corona facta invadunt me iaculatores eius;  
 "Sulcat renes meos, nec parcit;  
 "Effundit in terram fel meum.  
 "Aliis super alias plagis continuo me profigat;  
 "Impetum facit in me sicut bellator."<sup>11</sup>

In the same author, with what magnificence and sublimity are sorrow and desperation expressed!

"O si balance mea libretur calamitas,  
 "Iustaque trutina moles cumulati mali!  
 "Superat iniquo pondere arenas aequoris;  
 "Nec temere inaestuat gemitu erumpens dolor.  
 "Stant penitus imo tela insensu numinis  
 "Defixa latere; morsu lacerant viscera,  
 "Aegrumque lenta tabe spiritum hauriunt;  
 "Deique terrores acie instructa ingraunt.  
 "O cedat utinam supplicis precibus Deus!  
 "Effundat irae fraena tandem vindici;  
 "Manu soluta, liberoque brachio,  
 "Adigat trisulci vim coruscum fulminis,  
 "Miserumque plaga subito interimat simplici."<sup>12</sup>

The whole poem of Job is no less excellent in the expression and excitation of terror, as the example just now quoted sufficiently demonstrates. To this commendation, however, the prophetic writings seem to have the fairest claim; it being indeed their peculiar province to denounce the Divine judgements upon guilty nations. Almost the whole book of Ezekiel is occupied with this passion: Isaiah is also excellent in this respect, although he be in general the harbinging of joy and salvation. The following terrific denunciation is directed by him against the enemies of Jerusalem:

"Eiulate, nam propinquat dies Iehovae;  
 "Adveniet, ut ab omnipotente, vastitas!

<sup>11</sup> JOB xvi. 9—14.

<sup>12</sup> JOB vi. 2, 3, 4, 8, 9.

"Idcirco omnes manus solventur,  
 "Et omne cor hominis liquecet;  
 "Et consternati angoribus, et cruciatibus correpti,  
 "Instar parturientis dolebunt:  
 "Alter alterum attoniti respicient;  
 "Instar flammaram vultu ardente.  
 "Ecce dies Iehovae advenit;  
 "Atrocitas, et excandescencia, et aestus irae:  
 "Ut redigat terram in desolationem,  
 "Et peccatores eius ex ea excindat.  
 "Nam stellae coelorum, et eorum sidera,  
 "Non emittent lucent suam;  
 "Caligabit sol in ortu suo,  
 "Nec splendorem suum effundet luna.  
 "Et animadvertam in orbis malitiam,  
 "Et in impiorum crimina;  
 "Et comprimam arrogantium fastus,  
 "Et superbiam tyrannorum deliciam.  
 "Mortalem reddam obryzo pretiosiore,  
 "Et hominem auro Ophirino.  
 "Propterea coelos faciam contremiscere,  
 "Et commovebitur tellus e loco suo;  
 "In excandescencia Iehovae exercituum;  
 "Et in die irae eius exardescens." <sup>13</sup>

Jeremiah is scarcely inferior, though perhaps his talents are better suited in common to the exciting of the softer affections. As an example, I need only refer to that remarkable vision, in which the impending slaughter and destruction of Judea is exhibited with wonderful force and enthusiasm:

"Viscera mea! viscera mea! praecordia mihi dolent!  
 "Tumultuatur intus cor meum; silere non possum;  
 "Nam vocem buccinae audivisti, o anima mea; clangorem belli!  
 "Clades super cladem proclamatur, nam devastata est omnis haec terra:  
 "Subito vastantur tentoria mea, momento mea vela.  
 "Quousque videbo vexillum, audiam clangorem buccinae!—  
 "Aspexi terram, ecce autem informis est et vacua!  
 "Coelosque, nec lucent amplius!" <sup>14</sup>

It would be an infinite task to collect and specify all the passages that might be found illustrative of this subject: and probably we shall have more than one opportunity of discoursing upon these and similar topics, when we come to consider the different species of the Hebrew poetry: upon which, after requesting your candour and indulgence to so arduous an undertaking, it is my intention to enter at our next meeting.

<sup>13</sup> ISA. xlii. 6—13.

<sup>14</sup> JER. iv. 19, etc.

### PART III.

#### OF THE DIFFERENT SPECIES OF POETRY EXTANT IN THE WRITINGS OF THE HEBREWS.

##### OF PROPHETIC POETRY.

נְבוּאָה

### LECTURE XVIII.

#### THE WRITINGS OF THE PROPHETS ARE IN GENERAL POETICAL.

The poetry of the Hebrews classed according to its different characters ; this mode of arrangement results rather from the nature of the subject, than from any authority of the Hebrews themselves—The *Prophetic Poetry*—The writings of the prophets in general poetical and metrical—The opinion of the modern Jews and of Jerome on this point refuted—In the books of the prophets the same evidences are found of a metrical arrangement as in the poetical books : in the dialect, the style, and poetical conformation of the sentences—Obvious in respect to the two former circumstances ; the latter requires a more minute investigation, and also illustration by examples—The intimate relation between poetry and prophecy—The college of prophets ; a part of whose discipline it was to sing hymns to the different instruments : and this exercise was called prophecy : the same word, therefore, denotes a prophet, a poet, and a musician—Elisha, when about to pronounce the oracle of God, orders a minstrel to be brought to him—Poetry excellently adapted to the purpose of prophecy—A review of the most ancient predictions extant in the historical books, which are proved to be truly poetical.

Of the general nature and properties of the Hebrew poetry I have already treated : diffusely enough, if the extent of the disquisitions be considered ; but too briefly, I fear, and too imperfectly, if respect be had to the copiousness and importance of the subject. My original design, however, extended no farther than to notice the most remarkable passages, and such as I conceived to be immediately illustrative of the peculiarities of the Hebrew style. Even these it was my wish and intention rather to point out and recommend to your own consideration, than minutely to investigate and explain, esteeming it my province rather to exhort and stimulate to these studies, than to intrude upon this audience a formal plan of instruction. It would be superfluous, I am persuaded, to remind you, that the importance of the subject is not to be estimated by the feeble-



ness of my endeavours ; and, I trust, it would be still more unnecessary to caution you against a hasty acquiescence in any interpretation of those passages, which I have quoted, much less in my own : though I will frankly confess, that I have bestowed no small degree of labour and attention upon this part of my undertaking. What remains at present, is to distribute into its different classes the whole of the Hebrew poetry, and to mark whatever is worthy of observation in each species. In forming this arrangement it will hardly be expected that I should uniformly proceed according to the testimony of the Hebrews, or on all occasions confirm the propriety of my classification by their authority ; since it is plain that they were but little versed in these nice and artificial distinctions. It will be sufficient for our purpose ; that is, it will be sufficient for the accurate explanation of the different characters of the Hebrew poetry, if I demonstrate that these characters are stamped by the hand of nature, and that they are displayed either in the subject itself, the disposition of its constituent parts, the diversity of style, or in the general form and arrangement of the poem.

The first rank I assign to the PROPHETIC, or that species of poetry which is found to pervade the predictions of the prophets, as well those contained in the books properly called prophetic, as those which occasionally occur in other parts of the Scriptures. These, I apprehend, will be generally allowed to be written in a style truly poetical, indeed admirable in its kind ; as the many examples, which we have already produced, will sufficiently demonstrate. I fear, however, it will not be so readily granted that their claim is equally well founded with that of the books, which are commonly called poetical, to the other characteristic of poetry, I mean verse, or metrical composition. This fact is denied by the Jews ; and it is denied by Jerome,<sup>1</sup> who was a diligent scholar of the Rabbinical writers : after these, it is unnecessary to refer to more recent authors, who partly deny that the Hebrews were possessed of any metre at all, and partly allow it to those compositions only, which are commonly called poetical, or at most extend the concession to a few canticles scattered through other parts of the Scriptures. A thinking person, however, will not be misled by such authorities as these, before he examines whether they are to be accounted competent judges in this case, and what weight and credit is due to their testimony.

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<sup>1</sup> See Jerome, Preface to ISAIAH.

The Jews, by their own confession, are no longer, nor have been indeed for many ages, masters of the system of the ancient metre. All remembrance of it has ceased from those times in which the Hebrew became a dead language; and it really seems probable, that the Masorites (of whom so little is known) who afterwards distinguished the sacred volumes by accents and vowel points, as they are now extant, were possessed of so trifling and imperfect a knowledge of this subject, that they were even incapable of distinguishing what was written in metre from plain prose. For when, according to their manner, they marked certain books as metrical, namely, the Psalms, the Proverbs, and the book of Job; they accounted others, which are no less evidently metrical, absolutely prosaic, such as the Song of Solomon, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and consequently assigned to them the common prose accent only. In this opinion the Jews universally remain, and deny that these books are at all metrical, or to be classed with the three former. Now the disciple is hardly to be supposed to have more information than his masters; and although Jerome speaks very fluently about the Tetrameters, the Hexameters, the Sapphics, and Iambics, of the Hebrews, the very state and circumstances of the case demonstrate how little credit is due to his authority. Indeed his reasoning evidently proceeds from a confused head, when he attempts to trace a sort of remote similarity between the Greek and Hebrew metres; and to explain by some coarse analogies a subject, which he appears to have very imperfectly understood: in treating of which, after all, he is not able to preserve even the appearance of consistency. For instance, after Josephus and Origen, he contends, that the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy is composed in Hexameter and Pentameter verse; in another place, however, he affirms that the very same poem consists of Iambic Tetrameters. In proof of his opinion he appeals to the testimony of Philo, Josephus, Origen, and Eusebius, who were no less ignorant of the nature of the Hebrew metres than himself.<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding the opinion therefore of Jerome and the Rabbinical writers, I shall beg leave to offer a few remarks upon the other side of the question; after which it will not perhaps be thought altogether improbable, that most of the predictions of the prophets, as well as many other of the remains of Hebrew literature, were originally published in a metrical form.(A)

In order to prove that the predictions of the prophets are metri-

<sup>2</sup> See JEROME, *Pref. to Job*. *Pref. to Chron.* Eusebii *Epist. clv. ad P. Urbicam*.

cal, I must in part have recourse to the same arguments, by which I formerly endeavoured to evince that the Hebrew poetry in general consisted of a kind of metre : every one of which arguments, I must observe, is strictly applicable to this part of my subject, that alone excepted which regards the alphabetic poems. That it would be unnatural and absurd to look for instances of that kind in the prophetic poetry is evident ; since such an artificial arrangement would be utterly repugnant to the nature of prophecy ; it is plainly the effect of study and diligence, not of imagination and enthusiasm ; a contrivance to assist the memory, not to affect the passions. The other arguments, however, ought to be particularly adverted to upon this subject : the poetic dialect, for instance, the diction so totally different from the language of common life, and other similar circumstances,<sup>3</sup> which an attentive reader will easily discover, but which cannot be explained by a few examples ; for circumstances which, taken separately, appear but of small account, are in a united view frequently of the greatest importance. To these we may add the artificial conformation of the sentences ; which, as it has always appeared to me a necessary concomitant of metrical composition, the only one indeed which is now apparent, I shall afterwards endeavour to explain more at large, having especial regard to the prophetic writers. I must now premise a few other arguments, which will probably lead to the establishment of my opinion.

The prophets were chosen by God himself, and were certainly excellently prepared for the execution of their office. They were in general taken from those, who had been educated from childhood in a course of discipline adapted to the ministerial function. It is evident, from many parts of the sacred history, that even from the earliest times of the Hebrew republic, there existed certain colleges of prophets, in which the candidates for the prophetic office, removed altogether from an intercourse with the world, devoted themselves entirely to the exercises and study of religion : over each of these some prophet of superior authority, and more peculiarly under the divine influence, presided, as the moderator and preceptor of the whole assembly. Though the sacred history affords us but little information, and that in a cursory manner, concerning their institutes and discipline ; we nevertheless understand that a principal part of their occupation consisted in celebrating the praises of Almighty God in hymns and poetry, with choral chants accompanied by stringed instruments and

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<sup>3</sup> See LECT. III.



pipes.(b) There is a remarkable passage which occurs to this purpose: Saul being nominated king, and, pursuant to the command of God, consecrated by a solemn unction, a company of the prophets, as Samuel had foretold, descending from the mount of God, (that being the place in which the sacred college was situated) met him; and, preceded by a variety of musical instruments, *prophesied*: upon hearing which, he himself, as if actuated by the same spirit, immediately joined them, and prophesied also.<sup>4</sup> The same thing again occurred to him, and the persons sent by him to take David prisoner at Naioth; who, when they saw the prophets prophesying, and Samuel presiding over them, seized with the same divine spirit and enthusiasm, began to prophesy along with them.<sup>5</sup> I find no discordance among authors concerning the nature of this mode of prophesying: all are, I believe, agreed in this point, and all understand by it the praises of God celebrated, by the impulse of the Holy Spirit, with music and song. In this they follow the authority of the Chaldee interpreters, or rather the evidence of reason itself: for exactly in the same manner, Asaph, Heman, Iduthun, who were the chief musicians in the temple, are said "to have prophesied upon the harp, the psaltery, and the cymbal, when praise and thanksgiving were offered to Jehovah."<sup>6</sup> From these instances it is sufficiently apparent, that the word נָבִיא was used by the Hebrews in an ambiguous sense, and that it equally denoted a prophet, a poet, or a musician, under the influence of divine inspiration. To these we may add the prophetesses, Miriam the sister of Aaron, and Deborah, who were distinguished by that title, not only because they pronounced the oracles of Jehovah, but on account of their excellence in music and poetry; for these sister arts were united by the Hebrews, as well as by all other nations, during the first stages of society. After these proofs there can scarcely be any occasion to remark, that Solomon, or at least the editor or compiler of his proverbs, twice makes use of the word, which, in its ordinary sense, means prophecy, strictly so called, to denote the language of poetry. For he calls the words of Agur and Lemuel אִמּוֹנִיּוֹת, which Jerome renders *vision*, the seventy Greek translators *an oracle*, the Chaldee *prophecy*: when in reality those passages have nothing in them which can be properly said to bear any resemblance to prophecy; but are mere rhapsodies of morality, ornamented indeed with the

<sup>4</sup> 1 SAM. x. 5—10.<sup>5</sup> 1 SAM. xix. 20—24.<sup>6</sup> 1 CHRON. xxv. 1—3.

usual embellishments of poetry.<sup>7(c)</sup> The Hebrews certainly did not express by the same word ideas, which they deemed inconsistent, or repugnant to each other; and, what is remarkable, the same ambiguity prevails, the same word (and we may well presume for similar reasons) denotes both a prophet and a poet in the Arabic language, in the Greek, and in the Latin.<sup>8</sup>

Nor is it reasonable to suppose, that prophecy admitted poetry and music to a participation in the name alone; on the contrary we find, that she did not disdain to unite herself with harmony, and to accept of her assistance. The example of Eliaba is remarkable, who, when about to pronounce the answer of the Most High to the inquiry of the two kings of Israel and Judah, orders a minstrel to be brought to him, and upon his striking the harp, is immediately agitated by the Holy Spirit.<sup>9</sup> Many commentators have indeed supposed that the prophet applied to music only to soothe the perturbation of his mind; in this they follow an opinion of some of the more modern Rabbies, (an opinion, it may be observed, by no means satisfactorily proved) that every emotion of a more vehement kind excluded the Holy Spirit, and consequently was totally inconsistent with prophecy;<sup>10</sup> when, on the contrary, we learn from the testimony of the prophets themselves, that the act of prophesying was often, if not always, accompanied with a very violent agitation of the mind.<sup>11</sup> Be this as it may, I am inclined to believe, both from this last and the other instances, that the prophet himself accompanied the minstrel, and uttered some hymn, or rather the prediction itself, to the music of the harp; and both the style and the form of this prophetic reply are very much in favour of this opinion.

From all these testimonies it is sufficiently evident, that the prophetic office had a most strict connexion with the poetic art. They had one common name, one common origin, one common author, the

<sup>7</sup> PROV. xxx. 1. xxxi. 1. See also 1 CHRON. xv. 22, and 27, מְשִׁירֵי רֵץ, αῤῥων των ᾠδων, Septu.

<sup>8</sup> م / / د

منتبي, Προφητης, Vates. See JOSEPH MEDE's Works, p. 59. TIT. i.

<sup>12</sup> LUKE i. 67, and HAMMOND on the passage.

<sup>9</sup> 2 KINGS iii. 15.

<sup>10</sup> See MAIMON. More Neboc. ii. 36, and many others quoted by SMITH, Dissert. of Prophecy, c. viii.

<sup>11</sup> See JER. xxiii. 9. EZEK. iii. 14, 15. DAN. vii. 28, x. 8. HABAK. iii. 2 and 16.

Holy Spirit. Those in particular were called to the exercise of the prophetic office, who were previously conversant with the sacred poetry. It was equally a part of their duty to compose verses for the service of the church, and to declare the oracles of God : and it cannot, therefore, be doubted that a great portion of the sacred hymns may properly be termed prophecies, or that many of the prophecies are in reality hymns or poems. Since, as we have already proved, it was from the first a principal end and aim of poetry, to impress upon the minds of men the sayings of the wise, and such precepts as related either to the principles of faith, or the laws of morality, as well as to transmit the same to posterity ; it ought not to appear extraordinary, that prophecy, which in this view ranks as a principal, and is of the highest importance, should not disdain the assistance of an art so admirably calculated to effect its purposes. Of this we have an illustrious proof in that prophetic ode of Moses,<sup>12</sup> which he composed by the especial command of God, to be learned by the Israelites, and committed to memory : "That this song may be," says God himself, "for a witness against the people of Israel, when they shall depart from me ; this shall be a testimony in their mouths ; for it shall not be forgotten, nor shall it depart out of the mouths of their posterity for ever."<sup>13</sup>

But, as on the one hand, this poem of Moses is a clear and remarkable specimen of the prophetic mode of writing ; so, on the other, there are many prophecies which are not less conspicuous as poems. It remains, therefore, only to produce a few examples from the prophetic writings. Many of the most ancient of those, which are extant in the Mosaic history, I have already quoted,<sup>14</sup> as exhibiting the fairest examples of the Hebrew poetry : for instance, the imprecation of Noah, the blessing of Jacob, and the predictions of Balaam : than all which (and particularly those of Balaam) I do not know that the whole extent of the prophetic writings could afford more pertinent instances. Nay, so eminently distinguished are they by all the characteristics of poetry, that those who are inclined to acknowledge any kind of metre in the Hebrew poetry, must, I am convinced, refer to these as metrical compositions, if they be in the least desirous of maintaining their opinion by fact and argument. Among the prophecies of Balaam I will also venture to class that most elegant poem, which is rescued from oblivion by the prophet Micah, and which in matter and diction, in the structure, form, and

<sup>12</sup> DEUT. xxxii.<sup>13</sup> See DEUT. xxxi. 19, 21.<sup>14</sup> See Lect. IV.



character of the composition, so admirably agrees with the other monuments of his fame, that it evidently appears to be a citation from the answer of Balaam to the king of the Moabites :<sup>15</sup>

"Quanam re instructus comparebo coram Iehova?  
 "Inclinabo me supplex coram Deo altissimo?  
 "Num comparebo coram eo cum holocaustis;  
 "Cum vitulis anniculis?  
 "Num accepta erunt Iehovae millia arietum:  
 "Dena millia fluentorum olei?  
 "An dabo primogenitum meum hostiam pro peccato meo;  
 "Ventris mei fructum piaculum animae meae?  
 "Indicavit tibi, o homo, quid sit bonum,  
 "Et quid Iehova a te exigit?  
 "Nisi ut aequum facias, et pietatem colas,  
 "Et submisce te geras erga Deum tuum."<sup>16</sup>

But if we proceed to other parts of the Sacred History, examples will not be wanting: and among the first of these is that Cygnean song of Moses, as it may properly be called; I do not speak of the prophetic ode, which has frequently been distinguished by that title, but of the last blessing of that divine prophet, in which are predicted the future fortunes of the Israelites:

"Iehova ex Sina prodiit;  
 "Et ex Sehire illis exortus est."<sup>17</sup>

The prophecy is evidently of the same nature with that of Jacob; both in the exordium and the conclusion it is exquisitely sublime; and throughout the whole affords an admirable specimen of the prophetic poetry. In the same class with these may be ranked the answer of Samuel the prophet to Saul, in which he reproaches him with his disobedience and contumacy, and denounces against him the Divine decree of expulsion from his kingdom. It consists of four distichs elegantly corresponding to each other.

"Num delectatur Iehova holocaustis et sacrificiis,  
 "Aeque ac obsequio voci eius praestito?  
 "Scito, obsequium melius esse sacrificio,  
 "Et obedientiam adipe arietum.  
 "Profecto ut crimen divinationis est rebellio,  
 "Et quasi scelus idololatriae contumacia.  
 "Quoniam repudiasti mandatum Iahovae,  
 "Et ipse te repudiavit, ne rex sis."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See Mic. vi. 5, and Bishop BUTLER'S Sermon on the character of Balaam.

<sup>16</sup> Mic. vi. 6—8.

<sup>17</sup> DEUT. xxxiii.

<sup>18</sup> 1 SAM. xv. 22, 23.

The last words of David<sup>19</sup> afford an evident and illustrious instance to the same purpose, however difficult and obscure the verbal interpretation of the prophecy may be. I apprehend the examples from sacred history will appear sufficiently numerous, if I add the prediction of Isaiah concerning Senacherib, which is inserted in the book of Kings :

“ Contempsit te, subseannavit te, virgo filia Sionis ;

“ Post te caput movit filia Hierosolymorum :”—<sup>20</sup>

The same passage occurs again among the predictions of the prophet : and this reminds me that it is now full time to pass from the historians to the books of the prophets themselves, which will afford us abundant instances to demonstrate that the compositions of the prophets are truly poetical, and at the same time to illustrate the nature of their poetry.

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<sup>19</sup> 2 SAM. xxiii. 1—7.

<sup>20</sup> 2 KINGS xix. 21—34. ISAI. xxxvii. 22—35.

## LECTURE XIX.

### THE PROPHETIC POETRY IS SENTENTIOUS.

The psalmody of the Hebrews—The manner of chanting the hymns by alternate choirs; whence the origin of the poetical construction of the sentences, and that peculiar form, in which verses and distichs run parallel or correspondent to each other—Three species of parallelism; the synonymous, the antithetic, and the synthetic; examples of each, first from the books generally allowed to be poetical, and afterwards from the writings of the prophets—The sentiments of R. Azarias considered—The great importance of an accurate attention to this poetical conformation of the sentences.

THE origin and earliest application of the Hebrew poetry have, I think, been clearly traced into the service of religion. To celebrate in hymns and songs the praises of Almighty God; to decorate the worship of the Most High with all the charms and graces of harmony; to give force and energy to the devout affections, was the sublime employment of the sacred muse. It is more than probable, that the very early use of sacred music in the public worship of the Hebrews, contributed not a little to the peculiar character of their poetry, and might impart to it that appropriate form, which, though chiefly adapted to this particular purpose, it nevertheless preserves on every other occasion. But in order to explain this matter more clearly, it will be necessary to premise a few observations concerning the ancient Hebrew mode of chanting their sacred hymns.

Though we are rather at a loss for information, respecting the usual manner and ceremony of chanting their poems; and though the subject of their sacred music in general be involved in doubt and obscurity, thus far at least is evident from many examples, that the sacred hymns were alternately sung by opposite choirs,<sup>1</sup> and that the one choir usually performed the hymn itself, while the other sung a particular distich, which was regularly interposed at stated intervals, either of the nature of the proasm or epode of the Greeks. In this manner we learn that Moses with the Israelites chanted the ode at the Red Sea; for "Miriam the prophetess took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her with timbrels, and with danc-

<sup>1</sup> See NEHEM. xii, 24, 31, 38, 40, and the title of the PSALM lxxxviii.



es; and Miriam answered them," that is, she and the women sung the response to the chorus of men:

"Cantate Iehovae, quiae magnifice sese extulit;

"Equum equitemque in mare deiecit."<sup>2</sup>

The same is observable in some of the psalms, which are composed in this form. The musical performance was on some occasions differently conducted: for instance, one of the choirs sung a single verse to the other, while the other constantly added a verse in some respect correspondent to the former. Of this the following distich is an example:

"Celebrate Iehovam, quia bonus;

"Quia aeterna est eius benignitas:"

which Ezra<sup>3</sup> informs us was sung by the priests and Levites in alternate choirs at the command of David; as indeed may be collected from the psalm itself,<sup>4</sup> in which the latter verse, sung by the latter choir, forms a perpetual epode. Of the same nature is the song of the women concerning Saul and David,<sup>5</sup> for "the women who played answered one another;" that is, they chanted in two choirs the alternate song, the one choir singing,

"Saul hath smote his thousands,"

The other answering,

"And David his ten thousands."

In the very same manner Isaiah describes the seraphim chanting the praise of Jehovah:<sup>6</sup> "they cried alternately,

"Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Iehova exercituum!

"Plena est gloria eius universa tellus."

From the Jewish, the custom of singing in alternate chorus was transmitted to the Christian church, and was continued in the latter from the first ages; it was called "alternate or responsive,"<sup>7</sup> when the whole choir, separated into two divisions, sung the psalm alternately by strophes; and when this was done by single verses, or lines, that is, when the same division of the choir always sung the

<sup>2</sup> EXOD. xv. 20, 21. See PHILO *περι γεωργίας*, pag. 199, also *περι βίου θεωρητικού*, pag. 902. Edit. Paris, 1640.

<sup>3</sup> EZRA iii. 11.

<sup>4</sup> PSAL. cxxxvi.

<sup>5</sup> 1 SAM. xviii. 7.

<sup>6</sup> IS. vi. 3. See what Socrates relates of the origin of the ancient hymns. Hist. Eccl. vi. 8.

<sup>7</sup> PLIN. Lib. x. Epist. 97—"quod essent soliti carmen Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem."

latter part of the distich, they were said to sing the choral response.<sup>8</sup>(A)

Now if this were the ancient and primitive mode of chanting their hymns, as indeed appears highly probable, the proximate cause will be easily explained, why poems of this kind are disposed in equal stanzas, indeed in equal distichs, for the most part; and why these distichs should in some measure consist of versicles or parallelisms corresponding to each other.<sup>9</sup> And this mode of composition being admirably adapted to the musical modulation of that kind of poetry, which was most in use among them from the very beginning, and at the same time being perfectly agreeable to the genius and cadence of the language, easily extended itself into the other species of poetry, though not designed for the same purpose; in fact, we find that it pervaded the whole of the poetry of the Hebrews; insomuch that what was said of the heathen muses may still more strictly be applied to those of the Hebrews,—“they love alternate song.” On this occasion also it may not be improper to remark, that the word *תָּשָׁב*, which properly signifies to answer, is used more generally to denote any song or poem;<sup>10</sup> whence we can only infer, either that the word has passed from particular to general use, or that among the Hebrews almost every poem possesses a sort of responsive form.

Such appears to have been the origin and progress of that poetical and artificial conformation of the sentences, which we observe in the poetry of the Hebrews. That it prevailed no less in the prophetic poetry than in the lyric and didactic, to which it was, in the nature of things, most adapted, is evident from those very ancient specimens of poetical prophecy already quoted from the historical books; and it only remains to shew, that it is no less observable in those which are contained in the volumes of the prophets themselves. In order the more clearly to evince this point, I shall endeavour to illustrate the Hebrew parallelism according to its different species,

<sup>8</sup> See BINGHAM's Antiquities of the Christian Church, xiv. 1.

<sup>9</sup> “The correspondence of one verse, or line, with another, I call *parallelism*. When a proposition is delivered, and a second is subjoined to it, or drawn under it, equivalent, or contrasted with it, in sense; or similar to it in the form of grammatical construction; these I call parallel lines; and the words or phrases, answering one to another in the corresponding lines, parallel terms.” LOWTH'S Prelim. Dis. to Isaiah.

<sup>10</sup> EXOD. xxxii. 18. NUM. xxi. 17. HOS. ii. 15. PSAL. cxlvii. 7.



first by examples taken from those books commonly allowed to be poetical, and afterwards by correspondent examples from the books of the prophets.

The poetical conformation of the sentences, which has been so often alluded to as characteristic of the Hebrew poetry, consists chiefly in a certain equality, resemblance, or parallelism between the members of each period; so that in two lines (or members of the same period) things for the most part shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other by a kind of rule or measure. This parallelism has much variety and many gradations; it is sometimes more accurate and manifest, sometimes more vague and obscure: it may however, on the whole, be said to consist of three species.

The first species is the synonymous parallelism, when the same sentiment is repeated in different, but equivalent terms. This is the most frequent of all, and is often conducted with the utmost accuracy and neatness: examples are very numerous, nor will there be any great difficulty in the choice of them: on this account I shall select such as are most remarkable in other respects.

“ Cum exiret Israël ex Aegypto,  
 “ Domus Iacobi e populo barbaro;  
 “ Erat illi Iuda in sanctam ditionem,  
 “ Israël illius imperium.  
 “ Vidit mare, et fugit;  
 “ Iordanes conversus est retro:  
 “ Montes subsiluerunt, ut arietes,  
 “ Colles, ut filii ovium.  
 “ Quid tibi, o mare, quod fugeris,  
 “ Iordanes, conversus fueris retro,  
 “ Montes, subsilueritis ut arietes,  
 “ Colles, ut filii ovium?  
 “ A conspectu Domini contremisce, tellus;  
 “ A conspectu Dei Iacobi!  
 “ Qui vertit rupem in stagnum aquarum,  
 “ Petram in fontem aquarum.”<sup>11</sup>

The prophetic muse is no less elegant and correct:

“ Surge, effulge, nam venit lux tua;  
 “ Et gloria Iehovae super te oritur.  
 “ Ecce enim tenebrae operient terram;  
 “ Et densa caligo populos:  
 “ Super te autem exoriatur Iehova;  
 “ Et gloria eius super te conspicua erit.

<sup>11</sup> Ps. cxiv.



" Et incedent gentes in luce tua ;  
 " Et reges in splendore ortus tui." <sup>12</sup>

Observe also that famous prophecy concerning the humiliation and expiatory sufferings of the Messiah :

" Quis credidit praedicationi nostrae ;  
 " Et brachium Iehovae cuinam patefactum est ?  
 " Ascendit enim coram ut surculus,  
 " Et ut stirps e terra siticulosa :  
 " Nulla illi forma, nullus decor, ut aspiceremus eum ;  
 " Neque erat aspectus eius, ut eum cuperemus.  
 " Contemptus, neque amplius inter viros habitus ;  
 " Vir dolorum, et aegritudinem expertus :  
 " Et veluti qui faciem a nobis absconderet,  
 " Contemptus, neque eum aestimavimus.  
 " Certe infirmitates nostras ipse pertulit ;  
 " Et dolores nostros ipse sustinuit :  
 " Nos tamen eum aestimavimus plaga affectum ;  
 " Percussum divinitus, et afflictum.  
 " Ille autem vulneratus est propter peccata nostra ;  
 " Contusus ob nostras iniquitates :  
 " Poena nobis salutaris ei imponitur ;  
 " Et per eius livorem sit nostra curatio." <sup>13</sup>

Isaiah is indeed excellent, but not unrivalled in this kind of composition : there are abundant examples in the other prophets ; I shall, however, only add one from Hosea, which is exquisitely pathetic.

" Quomodo dedam te, o Ephraim !  
 " Abdicam te, o Israël !  
 " Quomodo reddam te Admae similem ;  
 " Faciam te instar Zeboimorum !  
 " Intus convertitur cor meum ;  
 " Simul aestuant viscera mea poenitentia.  
 " Non exequar irae meae fervorem ;  
 " Non iterum perdam Ephraim :  
 " Quia Deus ego sum, et non homo ;  
 " In medio tui sanctus, quanquam urbes non habito." <sup>14</sup>(B)

There is great variety in the form of the synonymous parallelism, some instances of which are deserving of remark. The parallelism is sometimes formed by the iteration of the former member, either in the whole or in part :

" Multum oppugnaverunt me ab adolescentia mea,  
 " Dicat nunc Israël ;  
 " Multum oppugnaverunt me ab adolescentia mea,  
 " Non tamen mihi praevaluerunt." <sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> ISA. lx. 1—3.    <sup>13</sup> ISA. liii. 1—5.    <sup>14</sup> Hos. xi. 8, 9.    <sup>15</sup> PSAL. cxxix. 1, 2.

"Deus ultionum, Iehova;  
 "Deus ultionum, effulge.  
 "Quousque impii, o Iehova  
 "Quousque impii triumphabunt."<sup>16</sup>

"Maxilla asini, acervum, acervos duos;  
 "Maxilla asini, percussi mille viros."<sup>17</sup>

Thus, Isaiah :

"Profecto noctu vastatur Ar Moabi, excinditur;  
 "Profecto noctu vastatur Kir Moabi, excinditur."<sup>18</sup>

So Nahum also in the exordium of his sublime prophecy :

"Deus zelotes, et ultor Iehova;  
 "Ultor Iehova, et irritabilis:  
 "Ultor Iehova inimicorum suorum;  
 "Et iniuriae memor ille in hostes suos."<sup>19</sup>

There is frequently something wanting in the latter member, which must be repeated from the former to complete the sentence :

"Misit rex, et solvit eum;  
 "Dominator populorum, et eum liberavit."<sup>20</sup>

In the same manner Isaiah;

"Reges videbunt, et assurgent;  
 "Principes, et adorabunt:  
 "Propter Iehovam, qui fidelis est;  
 "Sanctum Israël's, et te elegit."<sup>21</sup>

Frequently the whole of the latter division answers only to some part of the former :

"Iehova regnat, exultet tellus;  
 "Laetentur insulae plurimae."<sup>22</sup>  
 "Surge, effulge, nam venit lux tua;  
 "Et gloria Iehovae super te oritur."<sup>23</sup>

Sometimes also there are triplet parallelisms. In these the second line is generally synonymous with the first, whilst the third either begins the period, or concludes it, and frequently refers to both the preceding :

"Sustulerunt fluctus, o Iehova,  
 "Sustulerunt fluctus vocem suam;  
 "Usque sustulerunt fluctus fremitus suos.  
 "Vocibus aquarum multarum,  
 "Magnificis maris fragoribus,  
 "Magnificentior in excelso Iehova."<sup>24</sup>

<sup>16</sup> PSAL. xciv. 1 and 3.

<sup>17</sup> JUD. xv. 16.

<sup>18</sup> Chap. xv. 1.

<sup>19</sup> NAH. i. 2.

<sup>20</sup> PSAL. cv. 20.

<sup>21</sup> ISAL. xlix. 7.

<sup>22</sup> PSAL. xcvi. 1.

<sup>23</sup> ISAL. lx. 1.

<sup>24</sup> PSAL. xciii. 3, 4.

" Agite, redeamus ad Iehovam ;  
 " Nam ipse laceravit, et sanabit nos,  
 " Sauciavit, et nos curabit :  
 " Vitae nos restituet post biduum,  
 " Die tertio nos suscitabit,  
 " Et in conspectu eius vivemus."25

In stanzas (if I may so call them) of five lines, the nature of which is nearly similar, the line that is not parallel is generally placed between the two distiches :

" Quemadmodum rugit leo,  
 " Et catulus leonis super praedam suam,  
 " In quem cogitur pastorum turba ;  
 " Ad vocem eorum non pavebit,  
 " Neque ad tumultum eorum animus deiiciet."26  
 " Timebit Ascalon, et timebit ;  
 " Et Gaza, et vehementer dolebit ;  
 " Et Accaron, quoniam puduit expectationis suae :  
 " Et peribit rex de Gaza,  
 " Et Ascalon non habitabitur."27

Those which consist of four lines generally form two regular distiches ; but there is sometimes a peculiar artifice to be perceived in the distribution of the sentences :

" De coelo prospicit Iehova,  
 " Cernit omnes filios hominis ;  
 " De sede domicilii sui contemplatur  
 " Omnes incolas telluris."28  
 " Inebriabo sagittas meas sanguine,  
 " Et gladius meus devorabit carnem ;  
 " Sanguine confoscorum captorumque,  
 " De capite capillato inimici."29

In both the above passages, the latter members are to be alternately referred to the former. Isaiah too uses with great elegance this form of composition :

" Nam maritus tibi erit creator tuus ;  
 " Nomen illi Iehova exercituum :  
 " Et redemptor tuus sanctus Israël ;  
 " Deus universae terrae vocabitur."30

The sense has an alternate correspondence in these lines. In the following, the form of the construction is alternate :

" Et plena est terra eius argento et auro,  
 " Et nullus est modus eius thesauri ;

25 Hos. vi. 1, 2.

26 ISAI. xxxi. 4.

27 ZECH. ix. 5.

28 PSAL. xxxiii. 13, 14.

29 DEUT. xxxii. 42.

30 ISAI. liv. 5.



"Et plena est terra eius equis,  
 "Et nullus est modus eius curribus."<sup>31</sup>

The following is perhaps a singular instance :

"Quis sicut Iehova Deus noster?  
 "Qui altissime habitat,  
 "Qui humillime respicit,  
 "In coelis et in terra."<sup>32</sup>

Here the two members of the latter line are to be referred severally to the two preceding lines ; as if it were : "Who is exalted to dwell in the heavens, and who humbleth himself to inspect the things that are in the earth."

The antithetic parallelism is the next that I shall specify, when a thing is illustrated by its contrary being opposed to it. This is not confined to any particular form : for sentiments are opposed to sentiments, words to words, singulars to singulars, plurals to plurals, etc. of which the following are examples :

"Fideles sunt plagae amantis ;  
 "Sed mendacia osculu osoris.  
 "Anima satura proculcabit favum ;  
 "Sed animae esurienti omne amarum dulce est.  
 "Est, qui divitem se simulat, cum ei desint omnia ;  
 "Qui pauperem se fingit, cum ei divitiae sint multae.  
 "Sapiens sibi videtur vir dives ;  
 "Sed pauper prudens eum explorabit."<sup>33</sup>

There is sometimes a contraposition of parts in the same sentence, such as occurs once in the above ; and as appears in the following :

"Nigra sum, sed tamen pulchra, O Hierosolymitides ;  
 "Sicut tentoria Kedarensium, sicut aulaea Salomonis."<sup>34</sup>

The last line here is also to be divided and separately applied to the preceding, "swarthy as the tents of Kedar ; comely as the pavilions of Solomon ;" so likewise in the enigma of Samson :

"Ex edaci prodiit edulium ;  
 "Atque ex acri prodiit dulcedo."<sup>35</sup>

This form of composition, indeed, agrees best with adages and acute sayings : it is therefore very prevalent in the proverbs of Solomon, in some of which the principal force and elegance depend on the exactness of the antithesis. It is not however inconsistent with the superior kinds of Hebrew poetry ; for we meet with it in the

<sup>31</sup> ISAI. ii. 7.      <sup>32</sup> PS. cxlii. 5, 6.      <sup>33</sup> PROV. xxvii 6, 7. xiii. 7. xxviii. 11.  
<sup>34</sup> SONG OF SOLOMON i. 5.      <sup>35</sup> JUD. xiv. 14.

thanksgiving ode of Hannah, which is imitated in this particular, as well as in the general form of its composition, in that of the Virgin Mary :

" Arcus fortium conteruntur ;  
 " Et qui lapsi sunt, accinguntur robore :  
 " Saturi ob victum operam suam locant ;  
 " Et famelici esurire desinunt :  
 " Etiam sterilis septies peperit ;  
 " Et quae abundarat liberis, orba est.  
 " Iehova neci dat, et vitae restituit ;  
 " Deicit in orcum, et educit.  
 " Iehova depauperat, et ditat ;  
 " Deprimit, idemque evehit." 36

The sublimer poetry seldom indeed adopts this style. Isaiah, however, by means of it, without departing from his usual dignity, adds greatly to the sweetness of his composition in the following instances :

" Pusillo momento dereliqui te ;  
 " At miserationibus magnis te colligam :  
 " Momentanea iracundia vultum a te paulisper abdidit ;  
 " At sempiterna clementia tui miserebor, ait Iehova redemptor tuus." 37

" Ecce servi mei edent, sed vos esurietis ;  
 " Ecce servi mei bibent, sed vos sitietis ;  
 " Ecce servi mei laetabuntur, sed vos pudore suffundemini :  
 " Ecce servi mei cantabunt prae laetitia animi ;  
 " Sed vos lamentabimini prae angore animi,  
 " Et prae mentis cruciatu eiulabitis." 38

There is a third species of parallelism, in which the sentences answer to each other, not by the iteration of the same image or sentiment, or the opposition of their contraries, but merely by the form of construction. To this, which may be called the Synthetic or Constructive Parallelism, may be referred all such as do not come within the two former classes : I shall however produce a few of the most remarkable instances :

" Lex Iehovae integra est, restituens animam ;  
 " Testimonium Iehovae verax, sapientiam praestans imperito  
 " Praecepta Iehovae recta sunt, cor exhilarantia ;  
 " Disciplina Iehovae pura, oculos illuminans :  
 " Reverentia Iehovae casta est, perpetuo perstans ;  
 " Iudicia Iehovae ipsa veritas, iusta sunt pariter :  
 " Desiderabilia sunt auro, et obryzo plurimo ;  
 " Et dulciora melle, favis stillantibus." 39

36 1 SAM. ii. 4—7. Compare LUKE i. 52, 53.

37 ISAI. liv. 7, 8.

38 ISAI. lxxv. 13, 14.

39 PSALM xix. 8—11.

This kind of parallelism generally consists of verses somewhat longer than usual, of which there are not wanting examples in the prophets :

- " Quomodo cessavit oppressor, cessavit auri exactrix !
- " Fregit Iehova virgam impiorum, sceptrum dominantium !
- " Qui caedebat populos atrociter, plaga nunquam remissa ;
- " Qui irate dominabatur gentibus, profligatur nullo prohibente.
- " Quiescit, tranquilla est tota tellus ; erumpunt in cantum :
- " Etiam abietes laetantur de te, cedri Libani ;
- " Ex quo iacuisti, non ascendit in nos excisor.
- " Orcus propter te commovetur subtus, ut venienti eat obviam ;
- " Excitat tibi defunctos, omnes primores terrae ;
- " Surgere facit de soliis suis omnes reges gentium."40

Triplets are frequently formed of this kind of parallelism :

- " Exundaverunt aquis nubes ;
- " Fragorem edidit aether ;
- " Tum sagittae tuae discurrerunt ;
- " Vox tonitrus tui in turbine ;
- " Illuxerunt orbi fulgura ;
- " Commota est et intremuit tellus."41
- " Ero sicut ros Israeli ;
- " Germinabit in morem lilii ;
- " Et radices aget instar Libani.
- " Procedent eius surculi ;
- " Eritque decus eius instar oleae ;
- " Et odor ei, qualis Libano."42

Frequently one line or member contains two sentiments :

- " Tumultuantur gentes ; commoventur regna :
- " Edit vocem (Deus) ; illico colliquescit tellus.
- " Desistite, atque agnoscite me esse Deum :
- " Evehar in gentibus ; evehar in terra."43
- " Cum transibis aquas, ego tibi adero ;
- " Cum flumina, non te submergent :
- " Cum vades per ignem, non cremaberis ;
- " Et flamma non te comburet."44

There is a peculiar figure which is frequently made use of in this species of parallelism, and which seems altogether poetical : that is, when a definite number is put for an indefinite, principally, it should seem, for the sake of the parallelism : for it sometimes happens, that the circumstances afterwards enumerated do not accurately accord with the number specified :

40 ISAI. xiv. 4—9.

41 PSALM lxxvii. 18, 19.

42 HOS. xiv. 6, 7.

43 PSALM xlv. 6 and 10.

44 ISAI. xliii. 2.



- " In sex periculis te liberabit ;  
 " Et in septem non attinget te malum."45  
 " Semel locutus est Deus ;  
 " Bis etiam illud audiui."46

That frequently repeated passage of Amos is well known :

- " Propter tria peccata Damasci,  
 " Et propter quatuor, eam non restituam."47

The variety in the form of this synthetic parallelism is very great, and the degrees of resemblance almost infinite : so that sometimes the scheme of parallelism is very subtle and obscure, and must be developed by art and ability in distinguishing the different members of the sentences, and in distributing the points, rather than by depending upon the obvious construction. How much this principle pervades the Hebrew poetry, and how difficult of explication it is, may in some degree be illustrated by one example. This appears to consist of a single line, if the sentiment only be considered :

- " Ego vero inunxi regem meum in Sione monte meae sanctitatis."48

But the general form and nature of the psalm requires that it should be divided into two parts or versicles ; as if it were,

- " Ego vero inunxi regem meum ;  
 " Inunxi eum in Sione monte meae sanctitatis."

Which indeed the Masorites seem to have perceived in this as well as in other places.<sup>49</sup>

In this peculiar conformation, or parallelism of the sentences, I apprehend a considerable part of the Hebrew metre to consist ; though it is not improbable that some regard was also paid to the numbers and feet.\* But of this particular we have at present so little information, that it is utterly impossible to determine, whether it were modulated by the ear alone, or according to any settled or definite rules of prosody. Since however this, and other marks or vestiges, as it were, of the metrical art are alike extant in the writings of the prophets, and in the books which are commonly allowed to be poetical, I think there is sufficient reason to rank them in the same class.

Lest I should seem to have attributed too much to this confor-

45 JOB v. 19. 46 PSAL. lxii. 12. 47 AMOS i. 3, etc. 48 PSALM ii. 6.

49 For they mark the word מַלְאָכָא with the distinctive accent *Athnach*, by which they generally distinguish the members of the distichs. See PSALM xvii. 7. xxxii. 3. xxxiii. 14. cii. 8. cxvi. 1, 9, 12, 14, 15, 18. cxxxvii. 2.

mation of the sentences, and to have rashly embraced an opinion not supported by sufficient authority, I shall beg leave to quote to you the opinion of Azarias, a Jewish Rabbi, not indeed a very ancient, but a very approved author.<sup>50</sup> "Without doubt," says he, "the sacred songs have certain measures and proportions, but these do not consist in the number of the syllables perfect or imperfect, according to the form of the modern verse; but in the number of things, and of the parts of things; that is, the subject and the predicate, and their adjuncts, in every sentence and proposition." (Which words of Azarias are, however, to be understood with some limitation; nor are they to be literally interpreted according to their sense in logical treatises, for he proceeds,) "thus a phrase, containing two parts of a proposition, consists of two measures: add another containing four, and they become four measures: another again containing three parts of a proposition, consists of three measures; add to it another of the like, and you have six measures: for you are not to number the words or syllables, but the sentences." For instance, "Thy right hand, O JEHOVAH," according to Azarias, consists of two terms, or parts of a proposition; to which is connected, "is all glorious in power," consisting likewise of two terms; these joined together make a tetrameter. The following is constructed on a similar principle:

"Dextra tua, o Iehova, confregit hostem."<sup>51</sup>

Thus in the following propositions there are three terms or measures,

"Destillabit, ut pluvia, doctrina mea; fluet, ut ros, mea oratio."<sup>52</sup>

And thus joined together they form an hexameter. In fact, what he has remarked here is neither groundless nor altogether just. For with respect to many passages, in which the distribution of the sentences is very unequal, and in which the propositions have but little correspondence with each other, as happens frequently in the psalms, we must have recourse to some other solution; and when the sentences are most regular and correct, they cannot at all times be reduced to his rules. But although the present question does not depend upon this single point, no man, I think, who reads with attention the poetic books, and especially what may be properly called the prophetic part of them, will entertain a doubt that it is of the utmost importance to distinguish the system of the verses.

<sup>50</sup> Mantissa Dissert. ad Librum COSRI, p. 418.

<sup>51</sup> EXOD. xv. 6

<sup>52</sup> DEUT. xxxii. 2.

But should all that has been remarked concerning the members and divisions of the sentences appear light and trifling to some persons, and utterly undeserving any labour or attention; let them remember that nothing can be of greater avail to the proper understanding of any writer, than a previous acquaintance with both his general character, and the peculiarities of his style and manner of writing: let them recollect that translators and commentators have fallen into errors upon no account more frequently, than for want of attention to this article; and indeed, I scarcely know any subject which promises more copiously to reward the labour of such as are studious of sacred criticism, than this one in particular.(c)



## LECTURE XX.

### THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPHETIC POETRY.

The whole of the book of Daniel, as well as of Jonah, are to be excepted as not poetical, though of the prophetic kind; also certain historical relations inserted in the books of the prophets—Some poems occur in the prophetic writings, which properly belong to the other classes of poetry—The remainder constitutes what may be termed a system or code of prophetic poetry—The character of this species of poetry deduced from the nature and design of prophecy itself—An example of the true style of prophetic poetry produced from Isaiah, and explained: also another from the prophecies of Balaam, translated into Latin verse.

IN the two last lectures I endeavoured to explain upon what reasons I was induced to class the predictions of the prophets among the poetical productions of the Hebrews. I speak not of all, but the greater part of the prophetic writings: for there are among them parts which are not prophetic, and even among those which are, there are some passages not poetical. I except, in the first place, those narrations plainly historical, relating to the facts which gave occasion to the prophecies, and which serve to introduce, to explain, and illustrate them: some of this kind occur in Isaiah, and in Jeremiah many more. The whole of what is called the prophecy of Jonah is the bare recital of a fact, and contains nothing of poetry but the prayer of the prophet, which is an ode. Some of the prophecies themselves must also be excepted, which are indeed sublime and important as to the matter, but not at all poetical as to the style and metrical structure: of this kind many passages occur in Ezekiel; who frequently appears more of the orator than the poet. The whole book of Daniel too, being no more than a plain relation of facts partly past and partly future, must be excluded from the class of poetical prophecy. Much I confess of the parabolic imagery is introduced in that book, but the author introduces it as a prophet only; as visionary and allegorical symbols of objects and events, totally untinged with the true poetical colouring. The Jews, indeed, would refuse to Daniel even the character of a prophet, but the arguments under which they shelter this opinion are very futile: for those points which they maintain, concerning the conditions, on which the gift of prophecy is imparted; the differ-

ent gradations, and the discrimination between the true prophecy and mere inspiration ; are all trifling and absurd, without any foundation in the nature of things, and totally destitute of scriptural authority.<sup>1</sup>(A) They add, that Daniel was neither originally educated in the prophetic discipline and precepts, nor afterwards lived conformably to the manner of the prophets. I do not, however, comprehend how this can diminish his claim to a divine mission and inspiration ; it may possibly enable us, indeed, to assign a reason for the dissimilarity between the style of Daniel and that of the other prophets, and for its possessing so little of the diction and character of poetry, which the rest seem to have imbibed in common from the schools and discipline in which they were educated.(B)

There occur, moreover, in the writings of the prophets, certain passages, which, although poetical, yet do not properly belong to this species of poetry. I allude to some instances in Isaiah, Habakuk, and Ezekiel, which appear to constitute complete poems of different kinds, odes as well as elegies. These also being excepted, all the other predictions of the prophets (including such as are extant in the historical books, most of which have been occasionally quoted in the course of these lectures,) form a whole, and constitute that particular species of poetry, which I distinguish by the appellation of prophetic. I shall now endeavour, in the first place, to offer to your consideration such a description of this species of poetry, as may serve to distinguish it from the rest ; and afterwards to delineate the peculiar character of each of the prophets, as far as may be consistent with the object of these lectures.

The genius of the prophetic poetry is to be explored by a due attention to the nature and design of prophecy itself. The immediate design of all prophecy is to inform or amend those generations that precede the events predicted, and it is usually calculated either to excite their fears and apprehensions, or to afford them consolation. The means which it employs for the accomplishment of these effects, are a general amplification of the subject, whether it be of the menacing or consolatory kind, copious descriptions, diversified, pompous, and sublime ; in this also it necessarily avoids too great a degree of exactness, and too formal a display of the minuter circumstances ; rather employing a vague and general style of description, expressive only of the nature and magnitude of the subject : for prophecy in its very nature implies some degree of obscurity, and is

<sup>1</sup> See Maimon. More Neboc. ii. 45.



always, as the apostle elegantly expresses it, "like a light glimmering in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise."<sup>2</sup> But there is also a further use and intention of prophecy, which regards those who live after the prediction is accomplished, and that is, the demonstration and attestation which it affords of the divine veracity: this evidently appears to demand a different form of enunciation; for correct language, apt imagery, and an exact display of circumstances, are peculiarly adapted to this purpose. Since, however, a very plain description would totally withdraw the veil of obscurity, a more sparing use of this liberty of particularizing is frequently adequate to that purpose; for the particular notification of one or two circumstances, united with a general propriety in the imagery, the proper adaptation of which shall appear after the event, will afford an accumulation of evidence that cannot be withstood, as might be demonstrated in a number of instances.<sup>3</sup> The prophetic style, therefore, is chiefly constructed on the former principle; that is, it commonly prefers a general mode of amplifying and elevating the subject, rarely and cautiously descending to a circumstantial detail.(c)

There is also another particular, which must not be omitted. Prophecy frequently takes in, at a single glance, a variety of events, distinct both in nature and time, and pursues the extreme and principal design through all its different gradations. From this cause also it principally employs general ideas, and expresses them by imagery of established use and acceptation, for these are equally capable of comprehending the general scope of the divine counsels, and of accompanying the particular progressions of circumstances, situations, and events; they may be easily applied to the intermediate relations and ends, but must be more accurately weighed and proportioned to equal the magnitude and importance of the ultimate design.

If such be the genius of prophecy; if it be chiefly employed in describing only the exterior lineaments of events, and in depicting and embellishing general effects; it will not be difficult to understand with how much advantage it may make use of the assistance and ministration of poetry, and in particular of the parabolic style; the nature of which, as I have already copiously stated, is to afford an abundance and variety of imagery of established use and acceptation, from which every subject may receive the most ample and

<sup>2</sup> 2 PET. ii. 9.<sup>3</sup> See Lect. IX. conclusion.



the most proper embellishments. Hence too we may easily collect the peculiar character of the poetry.

This species of poetry is more ornamented, more splendid, and more florid than any other. It abounds more in imagery, at least in that species of imagery which, in the parabolic style, is of common and established acceptation, and which, by means of a settled analogy always preserved, is transferred from certain and definite objects to express indefinite and general ideas. Of all the images proper to the parabolic style, it most frequently introduces those which are taken from natural objects and from sacred history : it abounds most in metaphors, allegories, comparisons, and even in copious and diffuse descriptions. It possesses all that genuine enthusiasm, which is the natural attendant on inspiration ; it excels in the brightness of imagination and in clearness and energy of diction, and consequently rises to an uncommon pitch of sublimity : hence also it often is very happy in the expression and delineation of the passions, though more commonly employed in the exciting of them ; this indeed is its immediate object, over this it presides as its peculiar province.

In respect to the order, disposition, and symmetry of a perfect poem of the prophetic kind, I do not know of any certain definition, which will admit of general application. Naturally free, and of too ardent a spirit to be confined by rule, it is usually guided by the nature of the subject only, and the impulse of divine inspiration. There are not wanting, it is true, instances of great elegance and perfection in these particulars. Among the shorter prophecies I need only mention those of Balaam, each of which is possessed of a certain accuracy of arrangement and symmetry of form ; they open with an elegant exordium, they proceed with a methodical continuation of the subject, and are wound up with a full and graceful conclusion. There are many similar instances in the books of the prophets, and particularly in Isaiah, which deserve the highest commendation, and may with propriety be classed with the most perfect and regular specimens of poetry. I shall select for your consideration one example from that most accomplished writer, which is embellished with all the most striking ornaments of poetry : from this instance I shall not only demonstrate with what accuracy the prophetic Muse sometimes preserves the proper order and arrangement of the parts and circumstances ; but I shall be enabled, at the same time, to illustrate most of these positions, which I have now laid

down, concerning the nature and genius of prophetic poetry. Such an illustration will probably be not unnecessary; since it is to be apprehended, that what has been remarked only in general terms upon so subtle and difficult a subject, may, without the aid of example, appear not a little perplexed and obscure.

The thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth chapters of Isaiah contain a remarkable prophecy. It is a simple, regular, and perfect poem, consisting of two parts according to the nature of the subject, which, as to its general properties, is explained with the utmost perspicuity. The first part of the prophecy contains a denunciation of extraordinary punishment, indeed nothing short of total destruction against the enemies of the church of God; and afterwards, in consequence of this event, a full and complete restoration is promised to the church itself. The prophet introduces the subject by a magnificent exordium, invoking universal nature to the observation of these events, in which the whole world should seem to be interested:

*"Accedite, gentes, ad audiendum;*

*"Et populi, animum advertite:*

*"Audiat tellus, et plenitudo eius;*

*"Orbis, et omnis eius propago."*<sup>4</sup>

He then publishes the decree of JEHOVAH concerning the extirpation of all those nations against whom "his wrath is kindled:" and he amplifies this act of vengeance and destruction by an admirable selection of splendid imagery, all of which is of the same kind with that which is made use of by the prophets upon similar occasions; the nature of which is to exaggerate the force, the magnitude, atrocity, and importance of the impending visitation; whilst nothing determinate is specified concerning the manner, the time, the place, or other minute circumstances. He first exhibits that truly martial picture of slaughter and destruction after a victory:

*"Occisi eorum proiciuntur;*

*"Ex cadaveribus ascendet foetor;*

*"Montesque eorum sanguine colliquescent."*<sup>5</sup>

He takes a bolder flight, and illustrates his description by imagery borrowed from the Mosaic chaos (which is a common source of figurative language on these occasions, and is appropriated to the expression of the downfall of nations;) and, as if he were displaying the total subversion of the universe itself:

*"Et contabescet omnis coelorum exercitus;*

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<sup>4</sup> Chap. xxxiv. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Ver. 3.



"Coeli ipsi instar schedulae convolventur :

"Et omnis eorum exercitus decidet ;

"Sicut cassia de vite folia,

"Vtique marcida ex arbore sua ficus."<sup>6</sup>

A different image is immediately introduced ; a solemn sacrifice is celebrated, and an uncommon number of victims is displayed : JEHOVAH himself takes a part in this magnificent scene, and every circumstance is brought directly before our eyes :

"Nam inebriatus est in coelis gladius meus ;

"Ecce in Idumaeam descendet,

"In populum a me iustae internecioni devotum.

"Gladius Iehovae satius est sanguine,

"Pinguet factus adipe ;

"Sanguine agnorum et hircorum,

"Adipe ex renibus arietum :

"Siquidem Iehovae sacrificium est Botsrae,

"Et ingens mactatio in terra Idumaeorum."<sup>7</sup>

The goats, the rams, the bulls, the flocks, and other animals, which are mentioned in this passage and those which follow, are commonly used by the prophets to denote the haughty, ferocious, and insolent tyrants and chiefs of those nations, which were inimical to God. On the same principle we may explain the allusion to Botzra and Idumea, a city and nation in the highest degree obnoxious to the people of God. These, however, the prophecy seems only slightly or cursorily to glance at : the phraseology is indeed of that kind which expresses generals by particulars ; or consists, as I formerly remarked, of a figure taken from a determinate and definite object, and by analogy applied in a more extensive sense ; in which respect the very words which are made use of, have in this place a peculiar form and propriety.<sup>8</sup> But the same circumstance is again described by a succession of new and splendid images borrowed from the overthrow of Sodom, which, as was formerly demonstrated, may be termed one of the common-places of the inspired poets :

"Agitur enim dies ultionis Iehovae ;

"Annus poenarum sumendarum Sionis vindici :

"Et vertentur torrentes eius in picem,

"Pulvisque eius in sulphur ;

"Et terra eius in ardentem picem tota redigetur :

"Noctes diesque inextincta ardebit ;

"Fumus eius in aeternum ascendet :

<sup>6</sup> Ver. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ver. 5, 6.

<sup>8</sup> See LOWTH and VITRINGA on the place, and on chap. lxiii. 1.



" In perpetuas aetates iacebit deserta ;

" Per infinita saecula nemo eam peragrabit." <sup>9</sup>

Lastly, the same event is prefigured under the image of a vast and solitary desert, to which, according to the divine decree, that region is devoted.<sup>10</sup> This description the prophet afterwards improves, diversifies, and enlarges, by the addition of several important circumstances, all which, however, have a certain analogy or connexion with each other.

The other part of the poem is constructed upon similar principles, and exhibits a beautiful contrast to the preceding scene. The imagery possesses every possible advantage of ornament and variety ; it is, like the former, altogether of a general kind, and of extensive application ; but the meaning is plain and perspicuous. Many of the preceding images are taken from the sacred history ; the following are almost entirely from the objects of nature :

" Laetabuntur deserta et inculta ;

" Et exultabit solitudo et florebit, ut rosa :

" Eximie florebit et exultabit ;

" Etiam cum iubilatione et cantu :

" Dabitur ei Libani gloria ;

" Decor Carmeli et Saronis :

" Hi videbunt gloriam Iehovae ;

" Dei nostri maiestatem." <sup>11</sup>

I formerly remarked the extensive application of Lebanon and Carmel in a figurative sense, and that they are sometimes expressive even of the divine glory and majesty.<sup>12</sup> The cultivation and watering of a barren and rocky soil is so frequently, I might say invariably, in the parabolic style, employed to denote the divine grace and spiritual endowments, that there is no necessity for any further explanation of this symbol ; nor is the succeeding imagery, which, according to a similar analogy, seems to illustrate the same event, less clear and perspicuous.

To him who attentively reads and considers the whole poem, the order and arrangement of the subject will be more fully apparent. The passages which I have noted will, however, I apprehend, be sufficient to demonstrate the species of imagery, the style, and colours most congenial to the prophetic Muse ; they will also, I flatter myself, be sufficient in some measure to explain the manner in

<sup>9</sup> Ver. 8, 9, 10.

<sup>10</sup> ver. 11—16.

<sup>11</sup> Chap. xxxv. 1, 2.

<sup>12</sup> See Lect. VI. and VIII.

## LECTURE XXI.

### THE PECULIAR CHARACTER OF EACH OF THE PROPHETS.

The particular style and character of the different prophets; what parts of each of them are poetical, and what otherwise—Nothing deserving of notice of this kind in the poetry of Greece.—In the Latin poetry the fourth Eclogue of Virgil is remarkable; that poem much more obscure than it is generally accounted, and has not hitherto been properly explained.

“THE prophets have each their peculiar character,” says Jerome, speaking of the twelve minor prophets.<sup>1</sup> The same however might more properly be affirmed with respect to the three greater: for Isaiah is extremely different from Jeremiah; nor is it easy to conceive any composition of the same denomination more dissimilar to both of them than the book of Ezekiel.

Isaiah, the first of the prophets, both in order and dignity, abounds in such transcendent excellencies, that he may be properly said to afford the most perfect model of the prophetic poetry. He is at once elegant and sublime, forcible and ornamented; he unites energy with copiousness, and dignity with variety. In his sentiments there is uncommon elevation and majesty; in his imagery the utmost propriety, elegance, dignity, and diversity; in his language uncommon beauty and energy; and, notwithstanding the obscurity of his subjects, a surprising degree of clearness and simplicity. To these we may add, there is such sweetness in the poetical composition of his sentences, whether it proceed from art or genius, that if the Hebrew poetry at present is possessed of any remains of its native grace and harmony, we shall chiefly find them in the writings of Isaiah: so that the saying of Ezekiel may most justly be applied to this prophet:

“Tu omnibus numeris absolutum es exemplar,

“Plenus sapientia, et perfectus pulchritudine.”<sup>2</sup>

Isaiah greatly excels too in all the graces of method, order, connexion, and arrangement: though in asserting this we must not forget the nature of the prophetic impulse, which bears away the mind

<sup>1</sup> Praef. in XII. Proph.

<sup>2</sup> EZEK. xxviii. 12.



with irresistible violence, and frequently in rapid transitions from near to remote objects, from human to divine : we must also be careful in remarking the limits of particular predictions, since, as they are now extant, they are often improperly connected, without any marks of discrimination, which injudicious arrangement, on some occasions, creates almost insuperable difficulties. I lately produced a specimen from this prophet of a complete poem disposed in the most perspicuous order ; and in the former part of this volume many instances may be found where the particular predictions are distinctly marked. The latter part, which I suppose to commence at the fortieth chapter, is perhaps the most elegant specimen remaining of inspired composition, and yet in this respect is attended with considerable difficulty. It is, in fact, a body or collection of different prophecies, nearly allied to each other as to the subject, which, for that reason, having a sort of connexion, are not to be separated but with the utmost difficulty. The general subject is the restoration of the church. Its deliverance from captivity ; the destruction of idolatry ; the vindication of the divine power and truth ; the consolation of the Israelites, the divine invitation which is extended to them, their incredulity, impiety, and rejection ; the calling in of the Gentiles ; the restoration of the chosen people ; the glory and felicity of the church in its perfect state ; and the ultimate destruction of the wicked, are all set forth with a sufficient respect to order and method. If we read these passages with attention, and duly regard the nature and genius of the mystical allegory, as explained in the eleventh Lecture ; at the same time remembering, that all these points have been frequently touched upon in other prophecies promulged at different times, we shall neither find any irregularity in the arrangement of the whole, nor any want of order and connexion as to matter or sentiment in the different parts. I must add, that I esteem the whole book of Isaiah to be poetical, a few passages excepted, which, if brought together, would not at most exceed the bulk of five or six chapters.

Jeremiah, though deficient neither in elegance nor sublimity, must give place in both to Isaiah. Jerome<sup>3</sup> seems to object against him a sort of rusticity of language, no vestige of which, I must however confess, I have been able to discover. His sentiments, it is true, are not always the most elevated, nor are his periods always neat and

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<sup>3</sup> Pref. in Jer.



compact : but these are faults common to those writers, whose principal aim is to excite the gentler affections, and to call forth the tear of sympathy or sorrow. This observation is very strongly exemplified in the Lamentations, where these are the prevailing passions ; it is however frequently instanced in the prophecies of this author, and most of all in the beginning of the book,<sup>4</sup> which is chiefly poetical. The middle of it is almost entirely historical. The latter part, again, consisting of the six last chapters, is altogether poetical ;<sup>5</sup> it contains several different predictions, which are distinctly marked, and in these the prophet approaches very near the sublimity of Isaiah. On the whole, however, I can scarcely pronounce above half the book of Jeremiah poetical.(A)

Ezekiel is much inferior to Jeremiah in elegance ; in sublimity he is not even excelled by Isaiah : but his sublimity is of a totally different kind. He is deep, vehement, tragical ; the only sensation he affects to excite, is the terrible : his sentiments are elevated, fervid, full of fire, indignant ; his imagery is crowded, magnificent, terrific, sometimes almost to disgust ; his language is pompous, solemn, austere, rough, and at times unpolished : he employs frequent repetitions, not for the sake of grace or elegance, but from the vehemence of passion and indignation. Whatever subject he treats of, that he sedulously pursues, from that he rarely departs, but cleaves as it were to it ; whence the connexion is in general evident and well preserved. In many respects he is perhaps excelled by the other prophets : but in that species of composition to which he seems by nature adapted, the forcible, the impetuous, the great and solemn, not one of the sacred writers is superior to him. His diction is sufficiently perspicuous, all his obscurity consists in the nature of the subject. Visions (as for instance, among others, those of Hosea, Amos, and Jeremiah) are necessarily dark and confused. The greater part of Ezekiel, towards the middle of the book especially, is poetical, whether we regard the matter or the diction. His periods, however, are frequently so rude and incomplete, that I am often at a loss how to pronounce concerning his performance in this respect.(B)

Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, as far as relates to style, may be

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<sup>4</sup> See the whole of chap. ix. chap. xiv. 17, etc. xx. 14—18.

<sup>5</sup> Chap. xlvii.—li. to ver. 59. chap. liii. properly belongs to the Lamentations, to which it serves as an exordium.

said to hold the same rank among the Hebrews, as Homer, Simonides, and Æschylus among the Greeks.

Hosea is the first in order of the minor prophets, and is, perhaps, Jonah excepted, the most ancient of them all. His style exhibits the appearance of very remote antiquity; it is pointed, energetic, and concise. It bears a distinguished mark of poetical composition, in that pristine brevity and condensation, which is observable in the sentences, and which later writers have in some measure neglected. This peculiarity has not escaped the observation of Jerome: "He is altogether," says he, speaking of this prophet, "laconic and sententious."<sup>6</sup> But this very circumstance, which anciently was supposed, no doubt, to impart uncommon force and elegance, in the present ruinous state of the Hebrew literature, is productive of so much obscurity, that although the general subject of this writer be sufficiently obvious, he is the most difficult and perplexed of all the prophets. There is, however, another reason for the obscurity of his style: Hosea prophesied during the reigns of the four kings of Judah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; the duration of his ministry, therefore, in whatever manner we calculate, must include a very considerable space of time; we have now only a small volume of his remaining, which, it seems, contains his principal prophecies; and these are extant in a continued series, with no marks of distinction as to the times in which they were published, or the subjects of which they treat. There is therefore no cause to wonder, if in perusing the prophecies of Hosea, we sometimes find ourselves in a similar predicament with those who consulted the scattered leaves of the Sibyl.

The style of Joel is essentially different from that of Hosea; but the general character of his diction, though of a different kind, is not less poetical. He is elegant, perspicuous, copious, and fluent; he is also sublime, animated, and energetic. In the first and second chapters he displays the full force of the prophetic poetry, and shows how naturally it inclines to the use of metaphors, allegories, and comparisons. Nor is the connexion of the matter less clear and evident, than the complexion of the style: this is exemplified in the display of the impending evils, which gave rise to the prophecy; the exhortation to repentance; the promises of happiness and success, both terrestrial and eternal, to those who become truly penitent; the

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<sup>6</sup> Pref. in XII. Proph.



restoration of the Israelites; and the vengeance to be taken of their adversaries. But while we allow this just commendation to his perspicuity both in language and arrangement, we must not deny that there is sometimes great obscurity observable in his subject, and particularly in the latter part of the prophecy.

Jerome calls Amos "rude in speech, but not in knowledge;" applying to him what St. Paul modestly professes of himself.<sup>7</sup> Many have followed the authority of Jerome, in speaking of this prophet, as if he were indeed quite rude, ineloquent, and destitute of all the embellishments of composition. The matter is, however, far otherwise. Let any person who has candour and perspicacity enough to judge, not from the man but from his writings, open the volume of his predictions, and he will, I think, agree with me, that our shepherd "is not a whit behind the very chief of the prophets."<sup>8</sup> He will agree, that as in sublimity and magnificence he is almost equal to the greatest, so in splendour of diction, and elegance of expression he is scarcely inferior to any. The same celestial Spirit indeed actuated Isaiah and Daniel in the court, and Amos in the sheep-folds; constantly selecting such interpreters of the divine will as were best adapted to the occasion, and sometimes "from the mouth of babes and sucklings perfecting praise:" occasionally employing the natural eloquence of some, and occasionally making others eloquent.

The style of Micah is for the most part close, forcible, pointed, and concise; sometimes approaching the obscurity of Hosea; in many parts animated and sublime, and in general truly poetical.

None of the minor prophets, however, seem to equal Nahum in boldness, ardour, and sublimity. His prophecy too forms a regular and perfect poem; the exordium is not merely magnificent, it is truly majestic; the preparation for the destruction of Nineveh, and the description of its downfall and desolation, are expressed in the most vivid colours, and are bold and luminous in the highest degree.

The style of Habakkuk is also poetical; especially in his ode, which indeed may be accounted among the most perfect specimens of that class.(c) The like remark will also apply to Zephaniah; but there is nothing very striking or uncommon either in the arrangement of his matter or the complexion of his style.

<sup>7</sup> Proem. Comment. in Amos. 2 Cor. xi. 6.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 5.



Of Obadiah there is little to be said; the only specimen of his genius extant being very short, and the greater part of it included in one of the prophecies of Jeremiah.<sup>9</sup> Jonah and Daniel, I have already considered as mere historical commentaries.

Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, are the only remaining prophets. The first of these altogether prosaic, as well as the greater part of the second; towards the conclusion of the prophecy there are some poetical passages, and those highly ornamented; they are also perspicuous, considering they are the production of the most obscure of all the prophetic writers.<sup>10</sup> The last of the prophetic books, that of Malachi, is written in a kind of middle style, which seems to indicate that the Hebrew poetry, from the time of the Babylonish captivity, was in a declining state, and being past its prime and vigour, was then fast verging towards the debility of age.

Thus far I have thought proper to deliver my sentiments, as distinctly as I was able, concerning the writings of the prophets, and those parts which are to be accounted poetical or otherwise. This I did with a view of clearly explaining my conjecture (for I dare not dignify it with any higher appellation) concerning the prophetic poetry. A conjecture, which, though I will confess it is not without its difficulties, and which must, after all, depend in some degree upon opinion, yet I flatter myself, you will concur with me in admitting not to be utterly destitute of foundation.

I should now, according to the nature of my plan, proceed to speak of the prophetic poetry of the Greeks, if indeed any thing had been transmitted to us, even from their most celebrated oracles, deserving, I will not say, to be compared with the sacred prophets, but even to be mentioned at all. The fact is, there is no such poem now extant, nor do I believe there ever was one of that kind among the Greeks: a few verses there are indeed remaining, and those not above mediocrity; for the Pythian Apollo, if we may credit the Greeks themselves, was not always upon the best terms with the Muses. It appears, therefore, that he did not fail to excite the ridicule of sensible persons, not only for his ambiguous and enigmatical divinations, but for ignorance in the art of versification: nay, even the rude and superstitious, who gave him the amplest credit for the veracity of his predictions, could not help confessing, that he was a very indifferent poet. (D)

<sup>9</sup> Compare OB. 1—9. with JER. xlix. 14, 15, 16, 7, 9, 10.

<sup>10</sup> See chap. ix. x. and the beginning of xi.

Among the literature of the Romans, however, there is extant a much celebrated, and indeed admirable poem of this kind, no less remarkable for the elegance and perspicuity of the style, than for the obscurity and darkness of the subject: I speak of the fourth Eclogue of Virgil, which it would be inexcusable to pass unnoticed in this place, since from the first ages of christianity an opinion has prevailed, that this poem bore some remote relation to those genuine remains of prophecy, which have been the subject of this Lecture, and indeed that the substance of it was originally derived from some sacred fountain. The manner in which this could happen, I must confess, is not very easy to be explained: whether to account for the fact we have recourse to the ancient Greek translation of the Scriptures, the publication of which was certainly many years anterior to the Roman poet; or whether we suppose that the author might apply to those translations, which were made from the sacred writings by some Hellenistic Jews, and which were handed about as the prophecies of the Sibyls.<sup>11</sup> However this may have been, there are so many, and so manifest indications of the fact in the poem itself, that no person who reads it attentively can retain a doubt upon this head. The sentiments, the imagery, even the language itself has so direct an agreement with the sacred prophets; the subject has so much of intrinsic sublimity and magnificence; and on the other hand it is enlivened with so much boldness and spirit, is indeed so free and elevated, that considering it as the production of the chastest and most reserved of all the later poets, there is something altogether mysterious in the fact, unless we suppose that he deduced his materials from some higher source than his own genius. Though the subject has engaged the attention of some of the first literary characters in the world, the motive, the scheme, the intention of the poet still remains, and I fear ever will remain, undeveloped. The history and state of the Roman commonwealth at the time point out no circumstance or character, which appears to bear a sufficient relation to the subject, or which could afford room for such great and magnificent predictions. This I will freely confess, that the more I have contemplated this extraordinary production in this point of view, the less able I have felt myself to comprehend it. There is such a splendour of style, such an elegance in the versification, as deceives us at first respecting the obscurity of the matter.

<sup>11</sup> See Bishop CHANDLER's Vindication of the Christian Religion, chap. i. and GROTIUS on MATTH. ii 1.



But on a nearer inspection of each particular, on a thorough examination of the nature and the force of the imagery and diction, so many things occur totally different from the general fashion of the Roman authors, so altogether foreign to the conceptions of the people of that age and nation, that it is not easy to believe it was perfectly understood even on its first publication. But when a foreign interpretation, suggested by the writings of the Hebrews, (the full force and importance of which it is impossible the poet himself could have comprehended) serves to unravel the difficulties, and to enlighten all the obscurities of this extraordinary poem : when I consider this, I own I am at a loss at what point to stop the licentiousness of conjecture upon this subject : and indeed what imagination occasionally suggests, I dare scarcely express. (v) I will only say, the fact has something in it so extraordinary, so miraculous to my conceptions, that I am sometimes half inclined to fancy, that what Socrates, in the *Io* of Plato, says (probably in his usual tone of irony) of poets in general, might have actually come to pass : "Hence," says the philosopher, "the god, having by possessing their minds deprived them of their natural reason, makes use of them, as well as of the prophets and diviners, as his ministers, to the end, that we who hear them should understand, that matters of so great importance are not uttered by men in their sober senses, but that it is the god himself who utters them, and addresses us by their mouths."



OF ELEGIAC POETRY.

קִינָה

**LECTURE XXII.**

OF THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE HEBREW ELEGY; AND OF THE  
LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

The nature and origin of the Hebrew elegy traced into the solemn expressions of grief exhibited in their funeral ceremonies—The office and function of professed mourners : the dirges, which were sung by them, were short, metrical, and sententious ; many of the lamentations, which are extant in the prophets, were composed in imitation of them—The whole of the Lamentations of Jeremiah constructed upon the same principle—The general conduct and form of that poem ; the nature of the verse ; the subject and the style.

THAT poetry is indebted for its origin to the more vehement affections of the human mind, has been, I apprehend, very clearly evinced. The distribution of it into its different species is not, however, exactly regulated by the nature and order of the passions ; though I think this is a circumstance which ought not entirely to be disregarded. There are, indeed, some species of poetry which admit of every passion, such as the lyric ; and there are some which scarcely admit of any, such as the didactic : there are others, however, which are peculiarly adapted to particular passions, tragedy for instance ; and we have already had occasion to explain the nature of the passions which are congenial to the prophetic Muse. There is a distinct species of poetry, which is appropriated solely to one particular passion ; and, what is worth remarking, we have never known a people, who might be said to have made any proficiency in poetry, who had not a peculiar form of poem, invented purposely for the expression of sorrow, and appropriated wholly to plaintive subjects. This species of poem the Greeks, and most nations after them, distinguish by the name of Elegy : the Hebrews call it קִינָה or נִדָּה both which are significant of sorrow, or lamentation.

The genius and origin of this poem among the Hebrews may be

clearly traced into their manner of celebrating their funeral rites. It may indeed more properly be termed the dictate of nature than of custom, to follow to the grave the remains of a friend with grief and lamentation. The ancient Hebrews were not ashamed of obeying the voice of nature on this occasion, and of liberally pouring forth the effusions of a bleeding heart. The language of grief is simple and unaffected; it consists of a plaintive, intermitted, concise form of expression, if indeed a simple exclamation of sorrow may deserve such an appellation.

"O father! O my country! O house of Priam!"<sup>1</sup>

exclaims Andromache in the tragedy: nor less pathetic is the complaint of the tender father in the sacred history, on the loss of his beloved though disobedient son: "O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!"<sup>2</sup> There will not, therefore, be occasion for any laboured disquisition concerning that kind of solemn dirge which was used at funerals; but since the sacred writers afford many examples to this purpose, I shall select one or two. The prophet of Bethlehem brought the corpse of the man of God, who was slain by the lion, back to the city, that he might mourn over him and bury him. He placed him in his own sepulchre, and they wept over him, saying, "Alas, my brother!"<sup>3</sup> So in Jeremiah, *JEHOVAH* declares of Joachim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

"Non lugebunt eum, Ah mi frater! vel ah soror!"

"Non lugebunt eum, Eheu, domine! Eheu viri maiestas!"<sup>4</sup>

These and similar exclamations were sufficient for the simple expression of natural and unaffected sorrow. But wayward grief is frequently desirous of a more complete and ostentatious display of its feelings; it studies not only its own alleviation, by publishing its uneasiness, but endeavours to incite and allure others into a society in affliction. Thus when Abner fell a sacrifice to the treachery of Joab, David not being privy to the action, and in truth extremely afflicted on account of it; yet, from the difficulty of his situation, and the infant state of his authority, not daring to punish the murderer, he fulfils his duty both to himself and to the deceased in the eyes of the people, by attending the funeral in the character of chief mourner; "and he lifted up his voice and wept at the sepulchre, and all the people wept with him;" and then, by the united aid of poetry

<sup>1</sup> CICERO, *Tusc. Quæst.* lib. iii.

<sup>2</sup> SAM. xix. 4.

<sup>3</sup> 1 KINGS xiii. 30.

<sup>4</sup> JER. xxii. 18.



and music, he further stimulates their affliction : " and the king lamented Abner, and said :

" An perit Abnerus scelerati more nocentisque ?

" An reus infami crimina morte luit ?

" At tibi non fortes violarunt vincla lacertos,

" Pressive indignos dura catena pedes :

" Heu ! secure doli, et dictis confise malorum !

" Fraude et mentito captus amore peris !"

" and again all the people wept over him."<sup>5</sup>

Thus, a certain ostentatious zeal, which frequently accompanies real sorrow, is apt to persuade men, that it is impossible to pay too much respect to the memory of departed friends; that intemperance of passion too, which is always observable in these cases, self-indulgent to excess, and is more inclined to irritate than to soothe; in a word, opinion or fashion, which governs and misleads the bulk of mankind, easily persuades them that it is an indispensable duty incumbent upon the living to afflict themselves for the sake of the dead. Each of these causes has contributed to establish that custom, which prevailed in Palestine, in Phrygia, and afterwards among the Greeks and Romans, of engaging mercenary mourners to weep at their funerals.<sup>6</sup> This office generally fell to the lot of the women, either because it was supposed more congenial to the general imbecility of the female mind, or because, from the flexibility and softness of their nature, and from their tender and plaintive tone of voice, they were supposed more capable of working upon the affections. After the custom was once established, we find no scarcity of these professional mourners, well accomplished in all the discipline of lamentation and woe, and with tears always at command for a reasonable stipend. As in all other arts, so in this, perfection consisted in the exact imitation of nature. The funeral dirges were therefore composed in general upon the model of those complaints which flow naturally and spontaneously from the afflicted heart: the sentences were abrupt, mournful, pathetic, simple, and unembellished; on one account, indeed, more elaborate and artificial, because they consisted of verse, and were chanted to music.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> 2 SAM. iii. 33, 34.

<sup>6</sup> See JOS. SCALIGER, *Conjectanea in Varronem de Ling. Lat.* p. 76. Edit. R. Steph.

<sup>7</sup> See MATT. ix. 23, and LIGHTFOOT, *Exercitat. Hebr. and Talmud.* in loc.



Many vestiges of this custom are found in the writings of the prophets: for the predictions of calamity impending over states and empires are often replete with elegance, and generally assume the form of a funeral song. But this remark will be more clearly evidenced by a few examples; and these examples will serve at the same time to illustrate what has been alledged concerning this custom. Says the prophet Amos, addressing the Israelites, and denouncing vengeance and destruction against them, and their government,

Audite vatem luctuum prænuntium;  
Audite lessum funebrem:  
Occidit! æternum virgo occidit Israelis!  
Et iacet in patrio nuda, relicta solo!

And a little after;

Eheu! per urbem, per vias Eheu! sonet;  
Eheu! per omnes viculos:  
Doctisque iungat præficarum luctubus  
Rudem colonus naeniam.<sup>8</sup>

And in Jeremiah, on a similar occasion, JEHOVAH of hosts thus addresses his people:

Luctus peritas huc vocate foeminas,  
Moestae scientes naeniae:  
Orsae eiulanti flebiles modos choro  
Ferule carmen præcinant;  
Vt mollis omnes humor in genas fluat,  
Fluant perennes lachrymae.  
Nunc, nunc ad aures lugubris fertur sonus  
Sionis altae a moenibus:  
Funditus occidimus! natalia linquimus arva!  
Linquimus heu patri dulcia tecta soli!  
Adhuc Iehova flebiles cantus iubet;  
Parete iussis, præficiae!  
Docete moestos virgines lessi modos;  
Docete vicinas nurus:  
Mors urbem invadit! rapit heu iuvenesque senesque!  
Saevit acerba domi! saevit acerba foris!  
Corpora susa iacent, vacuis proiectus in arvis  
Vt fimus, utque iacet falce recisa seges.<sup>9</sup>

Many instances of the same kind occur throughout the prophets, in which, as in these, there is a direct allusion to the institution from which they originated. There are also many other passages ev-

<sup>8</sup> AMOS 5. 1, 2, 16.

<sup>9</sup> JER. ix. 17—22.

idently of the same kind, although the funeral ceremonies be not immediately referred to; and the peculiar elegance of these we shall not perceive, unless some regard be paid to the object to which they allude. The examples that I produce are, I apprehend, sufficient to indicate the nature and origin of this species of poetry, and to demonstrate, that these artificial complaints were originally formed on the model, and expressed in the language, of real sorrow. Hence also it will be apparent, in what manner, and by what gradations, the *הִתְנַחֲמוֹת* or lamentations of the Hebrews, assumed the form of a regular poem: but for the further elucidation of this subject, it may not be improper to examine the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the most remarkable poem of this kind extant, according to the principles of these funeral compositions; for unless we examine it in this manner, and by this criterion, it will be impossible to form a right judgment concerning it.

I shall endeavour to treat of this extraordinary production in the following order: First, of its nature and form in general; secondly, of the metre or versification; and lastly, of the subject, the sentiments, and imagery.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah (for the title is properly and significantly plural) consist of a number of plaintive effusions, composed upon the plan of the funeral dirges, all upon the same subject, and uttered without connexion as they rose in the mind, in a long course of separate stanzas. These have afterwards been put together, and formed into a collection or correspondent whole. If any reader, however, should expect to find in them an artificial and methodical arrangement of the general subject, a regular disposition of the parts, a perfect connexion and orderly succession in the matter, and with all this, an uninterrupted series of elegance and correctness, he will really expect what was foreign to the prophet's design. In the character of a mourner, he celebrates in plaintive strains the obsequies of his ruined country; whatever presented itself to his mind in the midst of desolation and misery, whatever struck him as particularly wretched and calamitous, whatever the instant sentiment of sorrow dictated, he pours forth in a kind of spontaneous effusion. He frequently pauses, and, as it were, ruminates upon the same object: frequently varies and illustrates the same thought with different imagery, and a different choice of language; so that the whole bears rather the appearance of an accumulation of corresponding sentiments, than an accurate and connected series of different ideas,



arranged in the form of a regular treatise. I would not be understood to insinuate, that the author has paid no regard whatever to order or arrangement; or that transitions truly elegant from one subject, image, or character, to another, are not sometimes to be found; this only I wish to remark, that the nature and design of this poem (being in reality a collection of different sentiments or subjects, each of which assumes the form of a funeral dirge) neither require, nor even admit of a methodical arrangement. The whole poem, however, may be divided into five parts; in the first, second, and fourth, the prophet addresses the people in his own person, or else personifies Jerusalem, and introduces that city as a character; the third part is supposed to be uttered by the chorus of Jews, represented by their leader, after the manner of the Greek tragedies: and in the fifth, the whole nation of the Jews, on being led into captivity, pour forth their united complaints to Almighty God. This last, as well as the others, is divided into twenty-two periods, according to the number of the letters of the alphabet; with this difference, that in the four other parts, the initial letters of each period exactly correspond with the alphabetical order. And from this circumstance we have been enabled to form some little judgement concerning the Hebrew metres.

The acrostic or alphabetical poetry of the Hebrews was certainly intended to assist the memory, and was confined altogether to those compositions, which consisted of detached maxims or sentiments without any express order or connexion. The same custom is said to have been prevalent, indeed is said still to prevail in some degree, among the Syrians, the Persians, and the Arabs.<sup>10</sup> With how much propriety the prophet has employed this form of composition, on the present occasion, is evident from what has been said concerning the nature of this poem. The manner and order of this kind of verse is as follows: Each of the five parts, or grand divisions, is subdivided into twenty-two periods, or stanzas; these periods in the three first parts are all of them triplets, in other words, consist each of three lines, only, in each of the two former parts, there is one period consisting of four lines.<sup>11</sup> In the four first parts, the initial letter of each period follows the order of the alphabet; but the third part is so very regular, that every line in the same pe-

<sup>10</sup> See ASSEMAN, *Biblioth. Oriental.* Vol. III. p. 63, 180, 188, 328.

<sup>11</sup> In Chap. i. 7: in Chap. ii. 7.



riod begins with the same letter, so as necessarily to ascertain the length of every verse or line in that poem: indeed, even in the others, though the lines are not distinctly marked in this manner, it is no difficult matter to ascertain their limits, by resolving the sentences into their constituent members. By this mode of computation it appears, that in the fourth part all the periods consist of distichs,<sup>12</sup> as also in the fifth, which is not acrostic: But in this last part I must remark another peculiarity, namely, that the lines are extremely short, whereas in all the rest they are long.

The length of these metres is worthy of notice: we find in this poem lines or verses, which are evidently longer by almost one half, than those which occur usually, and on other occasions. The length of them seems to be, on an average, about twelve syllables; there are a few which do not quite amount to that number, and there are a few which perhaps exceed it by two or three syllables: for although nothing certain can be determined concerning the number of syllables (in truth I pay no attention to the fictions of the Masorites) there is room, nevertheless, for very probable conjecture. We are not to suppose this peculiar form of versification utterly without design or importance: on the contrary, I am persuaded, that the prophet adopted this kind of metre as being more diffuse, more copious, more tender, in all respects better adapted to melancholy subjects. I must add, that in all probability the funeral dirges, which were sung by the mourners, were commonly composed in this kind of verse; for whenever, in the prophets, any funeral lamentations occur, or any passages formed upon that plan, the versification is, if I am not mistaken, of this protracted kind. If this then be the case, we have discovered a true, legitimate form of elegy in the poetry of the Hebrews. It ought, however, to be remarked, that the same kind of metre is sometimes, though rarely, employed upon other occasions by the sacred poets, as it was indeed by the Greeks and Romans. There are, moreover, some poems manifestly of the elegiac kind, which are composed in the usual metre, and not in unconnected stanzas, according to the form of a funeral dirge.

Thus far in general as to the nature and method of the poem, and the form of the versification; it remains to offer a few remarks concerning the subject and the style.

<sup>12</sup> But the period  $\text{ב}$ , as it is now read, can neither be conveniently distributed into two, nor into three verses.

That the subject of the Lamentations is the destruction of the holy city and temple, the overthrow of the state, the extermination of the people, and that these events are described as actually accomplished, and not in the style of prediction merely, must be evident to every reader; though some authors of considerable reputation<sup>13</sup> have imagined this poem to have been composed on the death of king Josiah. The prophet, indeed, has so copiously, so tenderly, and poetically bewailed the misfortunes of his country, that he seems completely to have fulfilled the office and duty of a mourner. In my opinion, there is not extant any poem, which displays such a happy and splendid selection of imagery in so concentrated a state. What can be more elegant and poetical, than the description of that once flourishing city, lately chief among the nations, sitting in the character of a female, solitary, afflicted, in a state of widowhood, deserted by her friends, betrayed by her dearest connexions, imploring relief, and seeking consolation in vain? What a beautiful personification is that of "the ways of Sion mourning because none are come to her solemn feasts?" How tender and pathetic are the following complaints?

"Nihilne haec ad vos, qui per viam transitis? attendite, et videte,

"Num sit usquam dolor instar mei doloris, qui mihi inflictus est,

"Quum moerore me affecit Iehova in die irae eius exardescens.

"Propter haec ego fleo, oculis meis aqua manantibus;

"Quia longe a me abest consolator, qui mihi recreet animam:

"Desolati sunt filii mei, quoniam invaluit hostis."<sup>14</sup>

But to detail its beauties would be to transcribe the entire poem. I shall make but one remark relative to certain passages, and to the former part of the second alphabet in particular. If, in this passage, the prophet should be thought by some to affect a style too bold and energetic for the expression of sorrow, let them only advert to the greatness of the subject, its importance, sanctity, and solemnity; and let them consider that the nature of the performance absolutely required these to be set forth in a style suitable, in some degree at least, to their inherent dignity; let them attentively consider these things, and I have not a doubt, but they will readily excuse the sublimity of the prophet.(B)

<sup>13</sup> JOSEPHUS, JEROME, USHER.

<sup>14</sup> LAM. i. 12, and 16.



## LECTURE XXIII.

### OF THE REMAINING ELEGIES OF THE HEBREWS.

Many poems of this kind still extant in the writings of the Hebrews.—One collection of Elegies or Lamentations appears to be lost.—Elegies in Ezekiel.—Many passages in Job may be accounted Elegiac.—About a seventh part of the book of Psalms consists of Elegies.—A perfect specimen of elegiac poetry from the Psalms.—The Lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan explained: attempted in Latin verse.

IN the last Lecture the nature and origin of the Hebrew elegy was explained; the form and commencement of that species of poetry was traced into the solemn dirges which were chanted at funerals by the professed mourners; and this was confirmed by instances taken from those short elegies or lamentations which occur in the prophets, and by an accurate examination of that remarkable poem, the Lamentations of Jeremiah. I shall now treat of some other poems, which, although they do not exactly assume the form of a funeral dirge, are nevertheless to be comprehended in this class.

That the Hebrews were formerly possessed of some collection of elegies or lamentations, which has not been transmitted to us, we may understand from that passage of sacred history,<sup>1</sup> in which mention is made of the solemn mourning publicly celebrated at the funeral of Josiah; where it appears that a poem, composed for the occasion by Jeremiah the prophet, amongst others had a place. Though the book, which is on this occasion referred to, and which probably contained the most excellent of the Hebrew elegies, appears to be lost, there are still extant many specimens of this kind of poetry; whence we may reasonably infer, that no species of composition was more in use among the Hebrews than the elegiac, the ode perhaps only excepted.

In the first place, beside those short dirges, which occur in the writings of almost all the prophets, as was before remarked, there are some in Ezekiel, which are actually distinguished by the title of Lamentations, and which may with the utmost propriety be referred

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. xxv. 25.



to the class of elegies. Among these are the two lamentations concerning Tyre, and the king of Tyre.<sup>2</sup> In these, though the intent of the prophet be to denounce vengeance and punishment against these objects of the divine wrath, rather than to lament their misfortunes, and though he succeed in his aim of exciting terror instead of pity, yet the mournful nature of the subject fully corresponds with the title, and both the matter and the sentiments bear some degree of resemblance to the funeral songs. According to the custom which prevailed on those solemn occasions, the glory, riches, and power of the deceased are pompously enumerated; and thus by contrasting his former prosperity with the present calamity, the effect is considerably augmented. As for the two prophecies,<sup>3</sup> in which the destruction of Egypt is predicted, they seem to have been entitled Lamentations merely from the mournful nature of the subject; for they contain nothing of the elegiac form or style, scarcely any sentiment expressive of sorrow, and seem altogether composed for the denunciation of vengeance, and the exciting of terror. Two other lamentations,<sup>4</sup> the one over the princes of Judah, and the other over Jerusalem, may be explained upon similar principles: they are indeed poetical parables, and have been already noticed in their proper place.

There are also many passages in that most admirable poem, which bears the name of Job,<sup>5</sup> deserving to be accounted legitimate elegies: and indeed I do not know any more perfect specimens of this species of composition; so completely are the inmost recesses of sorrow displayed, and the remotest fountains of pity explored and laid open. But since these are parts of an entire poem, they are not rashly to be detached from the body of the work; and since the elegant disposition, and the extraordinary beauties of this inimitable composition, will deserve a fuller examination, it is sufficient in this place to have mentioned these passages as exquisite treasures, which the Muse of sorrow might legally claim as her own, were she disposed to assert her rigid rights.

I proceed, therefore, to the book of Psalms, which is a collection, under the general title of hymns to the praise of God, containing poems of different kinds, and elegies among the rest. If indeed the

<sup>2</sup> EZEK. xxvii. and xxviii. 12—19.

<sup>3</sup> EZEK. xxxii.

<sup>4</sup> EZEK. xix.

<sup>5</sup> See Job, chap. iii. vi. vii. x. xiv. xvii. xix. xxix. xxx.

contents of the book were methodically arranged in their proper classes, not less than a sixth or seventh part would appear to be elegiac. Since, however, this is a matter dependant in a great measure upon opinion, and not to be clearly demonstrated upon determinate principles; since the nature of the subject, the complexion of the style, or the general form and disposition of each poem, must decide the question; and since different persons will judge differently upon these points; it will hardly be expected that I should on this occasion proceed to the regular classification of them. It will indeed be more to your advantage, and more to our present purpose, to select an example which may be clearly demonstrated to belong to the elegiac class.

Under this appellation then I shall not hesitate to recommend to your notice the forty-second Psalm, since I cannot help esteeming it one of the most beautiful specimens of the Hebrew elegy. The author of this elegant complaint, exiled from the temple, and from the public exercise of his religion, to the extreme parts of Judea, persecuted by his numerous enemies, and agitated by their reproaches, pours forth his soul to God in this tender and pathetic composition. The ardent feelings of a devout heart are admirably expressed, while the memory of former felicity seems to aggravate his present anguish. The extreme anxiety of a mind, depressed by the burthen of sorrow, and yet at the same time impatient under it; overcome by an accumulation of evils, yet in some degree endeavouring to resist them, and admitting, through the dark cloud of affliction, a glimmering ray of hope and consolation, is finely depicted. In frequent and almost instantaneous transitions he glows with love, and droops with lamentations; he complains, he expostulates; he despairs, and yet hopes; he is afflicted, and again consoled. It is not to be expected that any poetical version should express these sentiments with the force, the energy, and more particularly with the conciseness of the Hebrew, which is indeed not to be imitated in any other language: though it must be confessed, that this poem is more diffuse than the Hebrew poetry in general. The following paraphrase, however, though infinitely short of the original in sublimity, will perhaps serve to evince the correspondence of the subject and sentiments of this poem, with the elegiac productions of modern times:

"Cervus, ut in medio celsis de montibus aestu

"Actus, in algentes fortur anhelus aquas,



- " Sic mea vitali satiari numinis unda  
 " Mens avet, et Domini languet amore sui :  
 " Gaudet et optat amans, vitae se adungere fonti :  
 " His mihi deliciis quae dabit hora frui ?  
 " Scandere me quoties memini penetralia sacra,  
 " Et longe populos ordine pone sequi ;  
 " Aurea dum recolo missas ad sidera voces,  
 " Et plausum festis quem decet esse choris :  
 " In lachrymas totus miser et suspiria solvor ;  
 " Inter et aerumnas est mihi dulce queri.  
 " Cur ita turbaris ? cur te, mens, deliciis exspes ?  
 " Cur ita me torques anxia ? fide Deo :  
 " Scilicet hic placido recreat mihi lumine pectus ;  
 " Et mihi materies unica laudis erit.  
 " Dum queror, in mentem, liquidis Iordanis ab undis,  
 " Sepositisque iugis, tu mihi saepe redis.  
 " Gurgitis est gurgis, rauci comes aequoris aequor :  
 " Fluctibus infelix obruor usque novis.  
 " Luce, sed in media bonitas tua fulcit abisso :  
 " Nocte, parens vitae, tu mihi carmen eris.  
 " Tunc ego, cur, dicam, capiunt te obliviae nostri ?  
 " Rerum opifex, animae portus et aura meae !  
 " Cur prope confectum curis, lachrymisque sepultum,  
 " Me sinis immani durus ab hoste premi ?  
 " Hic petit insultans, ubi sis : ego vulneror inde,  
 " Ensis et in morem permeat ossa dolor.  
 " Cur ita turbaris ? cur te, mens, deliciis exspes ?  
 " Cur ita me torques anxia ? fide Deo :  
 " Scilicet hic placido recreat mihi lumine pectus,  
 " Et mihi materies unica laudis erit."

Another point, to which I would wish every person, who reads this Psalm in the original to advert, is the division of the periods, and the resolution of them into their constituent parts or members ; he will find, I believe, that the periods spontaneously divide into verses of nearly equal length and measure, exactly similar to those of the four first chapters of the Lamentations of Jeremiah ; such as I before remarked appeared to constitute the established metre of the Hebrew elegy. The whole of the nineteenth Psalm consists also of the same kind of verse, except the epode, which contains two long verses of the same kind, and one shorter, which last is once repeated. The forty-third Psalm too seems to be constructed upon similar principles, containing eight of the same kind of verses, with the same epode. And since it is written in the same train of sentiment, the same style, and even apparently in the same metre, it



ought not perhaps to be separated from the preceding Psalm, but rather to be considered as a part or continuation of the same composition: if this be true, the whole poem consists of three parts almost equal and alike, each of which is concluded by the same intercalary period or stanza.(A)

There is another most beautiful poem of the elegiac kind, which on this occasion solicits our attention, I mean the lamentation of David for Saul and Jonathan;<sup>6</sup> which appears to have been extracted by the historian from some poetical book, no longer extant, entitled  $\aleph\psi\aleph$ .(B) It will not, I flatter myself, be thought unreasonable to request your attention, while I endeavour to investigate, with some degree of accuracy, the nature and composition of this poem.

The poet treats, though in no common manner, two common topics, and those the best adapted to the genuine elegy; that I mean which was employed in the celebration of the funeral rites; he expresses his own sorrow; and he celebrates the praises of the deceased. Both sentiments are displayed in the exordium; but, as might naturally be expected, sorrow is predominant, and bursts forth with the impetuosity of exclamation:

"O decor Israelis, in montibus tuis perempto!

"Quomodo ceciderunt fortes!"

Grief is of a timid and suspicious temper; and always ready at inventing causes for self-torment; easily offended by neglect, and utterly impatient of ridicule or contempt:

"Audiverunt gemitus meos; non est qui me consoletur:

"Audiverunt omnes inimici mala mea; quod ita me affeceris, laetantur."<sup>7</sup>

So Jerusalem complains in Jeremiah, exaggerating in the strongest terms her own misfortunes. Our poet feels and expresses himself in almost the same manner:

"Ne annuntietis Gathæ,

"Neve prædicetis in vicis Ascalonis;

"Ne lætentur filiae Philistæorum,

"Ne triumphant filiæ præputiatorum."

The same passion is also sullen and querulous, wayward and peevish, unable to restrain its impatience, and firing at every thing that opposes it. "Would! ne'er that in the Pelian grove"—says one of

<sup>6</sup> 2 SAM. i. 17—27.

<sup>7</sup> LAM. i. 21.

the characters in the *Medea* of Ennius.<sup>8</sup> On another occasion we find a person inveighing against the innocent mountain :

*Αἱ αἶ' Αειψύθριον προδοσέταίρον,  
Οἶονς ἄνδρας ἀπώλεσας ;  
Μάχεσθαι τ' ἀγαθούς τε καὶ ευπατρίδας,  
Οἱ τότε ἔδειξαν οἶον πατέρων κύρησαν :<sup>9</sup>*

Our poet is not more temperate :

“ O montes Gilboae ! ne in vos ros neque pluvia.”—

If these passages were brought before the severe tribunal of reason, nothing could appear more absurd ; but if examined by the criterion of the passions, nothing can be more consonant to nature, more beautiful or emphatic. Not to refer effects to their real causes is in logic an imperfection, but in poetry often a beauty ; the appeal in the one case is to reason, in the other to the passions. When sorrow has had sufficient vent, there is leisure to expatiate on the accomplishments of the dead. In the first place they are celebrated for their virtue and heroic actions ; next for their piety and mutual affection ; and lastly for their agility and strength. Saul is honoured with a particular panegyric, because he had enriched his people, and contributed to the general felicity and splendour of the state. This passage, by the way, is most exquisite composition : the women of Israel are most happily introduced, and the subject of the encomium is admirably adapted to the female characters. Jonathan is at last celebrated in a distinct eulogium, which is beautifully pathetic, is animated with all the fervour, and sweetened with all the tenderness, of friendship.

I should have made some particular observations on the intercalary period or epode inserted in the Psalm which was lately under our consideration, but that I was aware an opportunity would again present itself during the examination of this poem. This recurrence of the same idea is perfectly congenial to the nature of elegy ; since grief is fond of dwelling upon the particular objects of the passion, and frequently repeating them. There is something singular, however, in the intercalary period which occurs in this poem, for it does not regularly assume the same form of words, as is the case in general, but appears with a little variation. It is three times introduced,

<sup>8</sup> CICERO, De Fato. See EURIPIDES, *Medea*, v. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Scolion apud ATHENÆUM, lib. xv. See EUSTATHIUS ad *Iliad* A. 171. Edit. ALEX. POLITI, Florentiæ, and HERODOT. Terpsichore, 63, 64.



beautifully diversified in the order and diction : it forms part of the *exordium*, as well as of the conclusion, and is once inserted in the body of the poem.

Another observation, though it merit no higher title than a conjecture, I do not hesitate to submit to your consideration. There appears to be something singular in the versification of this elegy, and a very free use of different metres. It neither consists altogether of the long verses, nor yet of the short ones (which are the most usual in the poetry of the Hebrews;) but rather of a very artful and happy mixture of both, so that the concise and pointed parallelism serves to correct the languor and diffuseness of the elegiac verse : and this form of versification takes place also in some of the Psalms. Certainly there is a great appearance of art and design in this nice and poetical conformation of the periods : and that no grace or elegance should be wanting to this poem, it is no less remarkable for the general beauty, splendour, and perspicuity of the style.

To do complete justice to the economy of this excellent production, it is absolutely necessary to exhibit it in an entire state. Not to tire you therefore with a repetition of the verbal translation, I have endeavoured to express the general sentiments and imagery in elegiac numbers.

Ergone magnanimi heroes, decus Israël,  
 Proh dolor ! in patriis occubuerunt iugis ?  
 Fama Philistaeas ah ! ne pertingat ad urbes,  
 Neu Gatham tantae nuntia cladis eat ;  
 Hostis ut invisos agitet sine more triumphos,  
 Iudaicisque nurus barbara laeta malis.  
 Triste solum, Gilboa ! tuis ne in montibus unquam  
 Vel ros, vel pulviae decidat imber aquae !  
 Nulla ferat primos aris tua messis honores ;  
 De grege lecta tuo victima nulla cadat !  
 Qua scuta heroum, qua Sauli parma relictæ est,  
 Necquicquam heu ! sacrum cui caput unxit onyx.  
 Non sine caede virum Sauli prius hasta redibat ;  
 Non Ionathani expers sanguinis arcus erat :  
 Nobile par, quos iunxit, amor, quos gloria iunxit,  
 Unaque nunc fato iungit acerba dies.  
 Ut celeres vicere aquilas, validosque leones,  
 Viribus et cursu bella cedere pares !  
 At vos, Isacides, Saulum lugete, puellae,  
 Qui dites vobis rettulit exuvias ;  
 Qui collo gemmas, qui textile vestibus aurum,  
 Coccina qui Tyria tincta bis arte dedit.



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Heu quianam heroum bello perit irrita virtus !  
Montibus in patriis, ah Ionathane, iaces !  
Tu mihi, tu aeterno fiendus, Ionathane, dolore  
Occidis, heu misero frater adempte mihi !  
Heu pietas, heu rata fides, et dulcia fesso  
Alloquia, heu sanctae foedus amicitiae !  
Quae mihi in adversis tulerat nova gaudia rebus ;  
Gaudia, foemineus quas dare nescit amor.  
Proh dolor ! heu quianam duro in certamine belli  
Fracta virum virtus, irritaque arma iacent ! (c)

## LECTURE XXIV.

OF THE PROVERBS, OR DIDACTIC POETRY OF THE HEBREWS.

משלי

The ancient mode of instructing by parables or proverbs—The Proverbs of Solomon: that work consists of two parts; the first, which extends to the ninth chapter inclusive, truly poetical, and most elegant in its kind: the remainder of the book consists of detached maxims.—The principal characteristics of a parable or proverb; brevity (which naturally involves in it some degree of obscurity) and elegance—Ecclesiastes: the argument, disposition, and style of that work—all the alphabetical Psalms of this kind, as well as some others—The Wisdom of the son of Sirach written originally in Hebrew, in imitation of the Proverbs of Solomon—The fidelity of the Greek translator; and the great elegance of the work in general—The Wisdom of Solomon, written originally in Greek, and in imitation of the Proverbs; the style and economy of that book—A Hebrew translation of the xxivth chapter of Ecclesiasticus.

In those periods of remote antiquity, which may with the utmost propriety be styled the infancy of societies and nations, the usual, if not the only, mode of instruction was by detached aphorisms or proverbs. Human wisdom was then indeed in a rude and unfinished state; it was not digested, methodized, or reduced to order and connexion. Those, who, by genius and reflection, exercised in the school of experience, had accumulated a stock of knowledge, were desirous of reducing it into the most compendious form, and comprised in a few maxims those observations which they apprehended most essential to human happiness. This mode of instruction was, in truth, more likely than any other to prove efficacious with men in a rude stage of society; for it professed not to dispute, but to command; not to persuade, but to compel: it conducted them not by a circuit of argument, but led immediately to the approbation and practice of integrity and virtue. That it might not, however, be altogether destitute of allurements, and lest it should disgust by an appearance of roughness and severity, some degree of ornament became necessary; and the instructors of mankind added to their precepts the graces of harmony, and illuminated them with metaphors, comparisons, allusions, and the other embellishments of style. This manner, which with other nations prevailed only during the first pe-

riods of civilization, with the Hebrews continued to be a favourite style to the latest ages of their literature. It obtained among them the appellation of מִשְׁלֵי (parables) as well because it consisted in a great measure of parables strictly so called; as because it possessed uncommon force and authority over the minds of the auditors.

Of this didactic poetry there are still extant many specimens in the writings of the Hebrews; and among these the first rank must be assigned to the Proverbs of Solomon. This work consists of two parts. The first, serving as a proem or exordium, includes the nine first chapters; and is varied, elegant, sublime, and truly poetical; the order of the subjects is in general excellently preserved, and the parts are very aptly connected among themselves. It is embellished with many beautiful descriptions and personifications; the diction is polished, and abounds with all the ornaments of poetry; in-somuch, that it scarcely yields in elegance and splendour to any of the sacred writings. The other part, which extends from the beginning of the tenth chapter to the end of the book, consists almost entirely of detached parables or maxims, which have but little in them of the sublime or poetical, except a certain energetic and concise turn of expression. Since the didactic poetry of the Hebrews assumes in general this unconnected and sententious form, and since this style intrudes itself into almost all the poetry of the Hebrews, and occurs frequently in poems of a character very different from the didactic; I shall treat principally of this latter part of the book of Proverbs, and endeavour more minutely to investigate the precise nature of a parable or proverb.

Solomon himself, in one of his proverbs, has explained the principal excellencies of this form of composition; exhibiting at once a complete definition of a parable or proverb, and a very happy specimen of what he describes:

"Poma aurea in opere reticulato argenti,

"Dictum prolatum in rotis suis."<sup>1</sup>

Thus he insinuates, that grave and profound sentiments are to be set off by a smooth and well turned phraseology, as the appearance of the most beautiful and exquisitely coloured fruit, or the imitation of it perhaps in the most precious materials, is improved by the circumstance of shining, as through a veil, through the reticulations of a silver vessel exquisitely carved. Nay, he further intimates, that it

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxv. 11.



is not only a neat turn and polished diction which must recommend them, but that truth itself acquires additional beauty, when partially discovered through the veil of elegant fiction and imagery.

To consider the subject in a still more particular point of view, let brevity be admitted as the prime excellence of a proverb.<sup>2</sup> This is, indeed, a necessary condition, without which it can neither retain the name nor the nature. For if the sentiment be diffusely expressed, if even when it contains a double image, it exceed ten or at most twelve words, it is no longer a proverb, but a harangue. For the discriminating sentiment must force itself on the mind by a single effort, and not by a tedious process; the language must be strong and condensed, rather omitting some circumstances that appear necessary, than admitting any thing superfluous. Horace himself insists upon this as one of the express rules of didactic poetry, and he has assigned the reason on which it is founded:

"Quicquid præcipies, esto brevis; ut cito dicta

"Percipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles."<sup>3</sup>

Solomon expresses the same sentiment in his own (that is the parabolic) manner:

"Dicta sapientum sicut stimuli,

"Et instar clavorum in altum defixa:"<sup>4</sup>

That is, they instantaneously stimulate or affect the mind; they penetrate deeply, and are firmly retained.(A)

Some degree of obscurity is generally an attendant upon excessive brevity; and the parabolic style is so far from being abhorrent of this quality, that it seems frequently to affect it, and to regard it as a perfection. This obscurity is not indeed altogether without its uses: it whets the understanding, excites an appetite for knowledge, keeps alive the attention, and exercises the genius by the labour of the investigation. The human mind, moreover, is ambitious of having a share in the discovery of truth; excessive indolence or dulness only requires a very open and minute display, or prefers a passive inertness to the exercise and the praise of perspicacity and discern-

<sup>2</sup> "The brevity of this kind of composition, and the condensing of much thought into a small compass, renders it more sententious, more sage and expressive. As in a small seed the whole power of vegetation, which is to produce a tree, is contained. And if any writer should amplify the sentence, it would be no longer a proverb, but a declamation." DEMET. PHAL. *Περὶ Εὐμηνίας*. Sect. ix.

<sup>3</sup> ART. POET. v. 336.

<sup>4</sup> ECCLES. xii. 11.

ment; and that knowledge is ever most delightful, which we have compassed by our own efforts.<sup>5</sup> Other causes, however, independent of the brevity and conciseness of the language, have, in many cases, contributed to the obscurity of the parabolic style. In the first place, some degree of obscurity necessarily attends those passages in which different objects are applied in succession to the illustration of each other, without any express marks of comparison: of this we have had an example in the parable just now quoted, and of this there are many other examples in the sacred writings. I will, nevertheless, select one or two, which are deserving of our attention for their peculiar propriety and elegance:

"Nubes, et ventus, et imber nullus;

"Vir sese venditans cum inani munere."<sup>6</sup>

The following is in a different form:

"Est aurum, et gemmarum copia;

"At pretiosa suppellex labia scientiae."<sup>7</sup>

Again, obscurity is almost inevitable, when the subject itself, to which the imagery appertains and alludes, is removed out of sight, and the sentiment assumes the form of allegory. Horace expresses a very common precept in plain language:

"Sperne voluptates; nocet empti dolore voluptas."<sup>8</sup>

But with how much more elegance does Solomon deliver the same precept in a figurative manner, and under the veil of allegory!

"Invenistine mel? quod modo sat erit comede;

"Ne eo satiere, et nausees."<sup>9</sup>

Some obscurity also attends any comparison which is of extensive application: of this the following seems a pertinent example:

"Ut in aquis facies faciei [respondet],

"Sic homini cor hominis:"<sup>10</sup>

This is certainly very difficult to apply or to define, since it may refer in many different views to the faculties, genius, affections, will, attachments, manners, virtues, and vices of men, among which there generally subsists a certain agreement or similarity from imitation, and from habits which are insensibly caught in social intercourse.

5 ————— "Pater ipse colendi

"Haud facilem esse viam voluit, primusque per artem

"Movit agros, curis acuens mortalia corda:

"Nec torpere gravi passus sua regna veterno."

6 PROV. xxv. 14.

7 PROV. xx. 15.

8 LIB. i. Ep. ii. v. 55.

9 PROV. xxv. 16.

10 PROV. xxvii. 19.



Lastly, not to dwell too long upon this subject, some obscurity succeeds, when the principal, or perhaps the whole force of a proverb or parable, does not lie in the direct and literal sense, but in something not immediately expressed, which is however concomitant with it :

“ *Aurem audientem, et oculum videntem,*

“ *Utrumque eorum fecit Iehova.*”<sup>11</sup>

To dwell upon the external and literal sense of this proverb, will only bewilder the reader in the dubious turn of the expression ; but how sublime, how profitable, is the sentiment, when it comes from the pen of the Psalmist, embellished with his usual perspicuity and animation ?

“ *Qui plantavit aurem, nonne ipse audiet ?*

“ *Qui formavit oculum, nonne ipse videbit ?*”<sup>12</sup>

The last quality that I shall mention as essential to a parable or proverb, is elegance ; which is not inconsistent with brevity, or indeed with some degree of obscurity. I speak of elegance as it respects the sentiment, the imagery, and the diction, and of its union with all these we have already had sufficient proof in all the parables which have been quoted in the course of this Lecture. It may however be proper to remark in this place, that even those proverbs, which are the plainest, most obvious, and simple, which contain nothing remarkable either in sentiment or style, are not to be esteemed without their peculiar elegance, if they possess only brevity, and that neat, compact form, and roundness of period, which alone are sufficient to constitute a parable. Such is the maxim quoted by David in the sacred history as an ancient proverb :

“ *A sceleratis prodibit scelus :*”<sup>13</sup>

Such is that of Solomon :

“ *Odium suscitabit rixas ;*

“ *Sed omnia delicta operiet amor :*”<sup>14</sup>

and many others which might easily be produced from the same author.

There is another didactic work of Solomon, entitled *תנחומים* (Ecclesiastes) or the Preacher ; or rather perhaps, Wisdom the Preacher, the general tenor and style of which is very different from the book of Proverbs, though there are many detached sentiments and proverbs interspersed. For the whole work is uniform, and confin-

<sup>11</sup> PROV. XX. 12.

<sup>12</sup> PSALM XCIV. 9.

<sup>13</sup> 1 SAM. XXIV. 13.

<sup>14</sup> PROV. X. 12.



ed to one subject, namely, the vanity of the world exemplified by the experience of Solomon, who is introduced in the character of a person investigating a very difficult question, examining the arguments on either side, and at length disengaging himself from an anxious and doubtful disputation. It would be very difficult to distinguish the parts and arrangement of this production; the order of the subject and the connexion of the arguments are involved in so much obscurity, that scarcely any two commentators have agreed concerning the plan of the work, and the accurate division of it into parts or sections. The truth is, the laws of methodical composition and arrangement were neither known by the Hebrews, nor regarded in their didactic writings. They uniformly retained the old sententious manner, nor did they submit to method, even where the occasion appeared to demand it. The style of this work is, however, singular; the language is generally low, I might almost call it mean or vulgar; it is frequently loose, unconnected, approaching to the incorrectness of conversation; and possesses very little of the poetical character, even in the composition and structure of the periods: which peculiarity may possibly be accounted for from the nature of the subject. Contrary to the opinion of the Rabbies, Ecclesiastes has been classed among the poetical books; though if their authority and opinions were of any weight or importance, they might, perhaps, on this occasion, deserve some attention.<sup>(u)</sup>

Some of the Psalms also belong properly to this class; the alphabetical, for instance, with some others. The alphabetical or acrostic form of composition has been more than once alluded to in the course of these lectures. The chief commendation of these poems, is, that they are excellently accommodated to ordinary use; that the sentiments are serious, devout, and practical; the language chaste and perspicuous; the composition neat, and regularly adapted to the sententious form.

There are extant, besides these, two other considerable works of the didactic kind, which the Hebrew poetry may legally claim, though they are only extant in Greek prose. I mean, the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach, and that which is entitled, the Wisdom of Solomon.

The work of the Son of Sirach, translated from the Hebrew into Greek, by one of the descendants of the author, is altogether of the same kind with the Proverbs of Solomon; insomuch, that it originally bore the same title (מִשְׁלֵי יִרְמְיָהוּ) as we learn from Jerome, who di-

rectly asserts, that he had seen the book in Hebrew;<sup>15</sup> and I see no reason why his assertion should not relate to the original Hebrew copy, rather than to any Syriac version. However this may be, it is clear, even from the Greek translation, which we have, that the book in every respect resembles the Proverbs of Solomon, as nearly as an imitation can resemble an original. There is a great similarity in the matter, the sentiments, and the diction; the complexion of the style, and the construction of the periods, are quite the same; so that I cannot entertain a doubt, that the author actually adopted the same mode of versification, whatever it was, if we can admit that any knowledge of the Hebrew metres was extant at the time when he is supposed to have written. For all that we are able to conjecture on this head we are indebted to the great fidelity of the translator, which is abundantly manifested in every part of the work. He seems indeed not at all to have affected the elegancies of the Greek language, but to have performed his duty with the most religious regard to the Hebrew idiom; he not only exhibits faithfully the sentiments, but seems even to have numbered the words, and exactly to have preserved their order: so that, were it literally and accurately to be re-translated, I have very little doubt that, for the most part, the original diction would be recovered. If any person will make the experiment on a small scale, he will readily discern the perfect coincidence of this composition with the most ancient specimens of the didactic poetry of the Hebrews; so exact indeed is the agreement both in form and character, that the reader might, without much difficulty, be persuaded that he was perusing the compositions of another Solomon. This author is however an imitator chiefly of the former part of the book of Proverbs: for there is more connexion and order in the sentiments; the style is also more highly coloured, and abounds more in imagery and figures than the didactic poetry of the Hebrews in general requires. As an instance, I need only mention that admirable personification of Wisdom exhibited by him, in which he has so happily adopted the manner of his great predecessor.<sup>16</sup>

The Wisdom of Solomon is also composed in imitation of that prince of didactic writers, but with a degree of success very unequal indeed to that of the Son of Sirach. It is not, like the book which bears his name, a translation from the Hebrew, but is evidently the

<sup>15</sup> *Pref. in Libros Salomonis.*

<sup>16</sup> *EccLus. xxiv.*



performance of some Hellenistic Jew, and originally written in Greek. The style is very unequal; it is often pompous and turgid, as well as tedious and diffuse, and abounds in epithets, directly contrary to the practice of the Hebrews; it is however sometimes temperate, poetical, and sublime. The construction is occasionally sententious, and tolerably accurate in that respect, so as to discover very plainly that the author had the old Hebrew poetry for his model, though he fell far short of its beauty and sublimity. The economy of the work is still more faulty; he continues the prayers of Solomon from the ninth chapter to the very end of the book; and they consequently take up more than one half of the whole. But beside the tediousness of such a harangue, he indulges in too great a subtilty of disquisition upon abstruse subjects, and mingles many things very foreign to the nature of an address to the Deity: and after all, the subject itself is brought to no perfect conclusion. On these accounts I agree with those critics, who suppose this book to be a much more modern production than that of the Son of Sirach, and to have been composed in a less enlightened age.

That I may not dismiss the subject without exhibiting a specimen of some complete poem of the kind, such as I have hitherto given, I shall add to this lecture a Hebrew translation of a part of Ecclesiasticus, namely, that elegant personification of Wisdom I lately mentioned; in which I have endeavoured as much as possible to preserve, or rather restore, the form and character of the original.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH CHAPTER OF ECCLESIASTICUS.

תהלת חכמה לישוע בן סירה:

חכמה תהלה נפשה  
 ובחור עמה תשחבה:  
 בקהל עליון תפתח פיה  
 ולפני חילו תהלהל:  
 אני מפי עליון יצאתי  
 וכערפל כסיתי הארץ:  
 אני במרומים שכנתי  
 וכסאי בעמוד ענן:  
 חוג השמים סבתי לברי  
 ובמצולת תהומות התהלכתי:  
 בגלי הים ובכל הארץ  
 ובכל עם וגוי קניתי:  
 עם כל אלה דרשתי מנוחה



ובנחלת מי אליך :  
 אז יצוני ויצר כל  
 ובוראני הניח אהלי :  
 ויאמר ביעקוב שכני  
 ובשראל נחלי :  
 מעולם מראשית קנני  
 ועד עולמים לא אהדל :  
 באהל קדוש לפני שרתי  
 וכך בציון הצבתי :  
 בעיר אהובה כמי כן הניחני  
 ובירושלים ממשלתי :  
 ואשרישה בעם נכבד  
 בחלק יהוה נחלתו :  
 כארז העליתי בלבנון  
 וכברוש בהררי חרמון :  
 כתמר העליתי בעין גדי  
 וכנטעי חבצלת ביריחו :  
 כזית נעים בשדה  
 ואעלה כערמון עלי מים :  
 כקנמון וקנה בשם נתתי ריח  
 וכמר מבחר נתתי ריח נוחות :  
 כחלבנה ושחלת ונטף  
 וכקטור חלבנה במשכן :  
 ואני כאילה שלחתי ענפי  
 וענפי ענפי כבוד ורחן :  
 אני כגפן צומחת חן  
 ונצותי פרו כבוד ועשר :  
 קרבו אלי מתאורי  
 ומתבואותי השבעו :  
 כי זכרי מדבש מחוק  
 ונחלתי מדבש ונסה :  
 אוכליני עוד ירעבון  
 ושותיני עוד יצמאון :  
 השומע אלי לא יבוש  
 ועובדים בי לא יחטאון :  
 כל אלה שפר ברית אל עליון  
 תורה שצוה לנו משה  
 נחלה למקדלות יעקוב :  
 הממלא כפישון חכמה  
 וכחדקל בימי אביב :  
 המרבה כפרת בינה

וכירדן בימי קציר :  
 המוציא כיאור מוסר  
 וכניחון בימי בציר :  
 לא כלה הראשון לדעתה  
 וכן האחרון לא יחקרנה :  
 כי מים נמלאו מחשבותיה  
 ועצתה מתהום רבה :  
 ואני כמוצא מים מיאור  
 וכחעלה יצאתי בפרדס :  
 אמרתי אשתה נא את גני  
 והריתי את חלמי :  
 והנה היתה תעלתי ליאור  
 ויהי היאורי לים :  
 עוד מוסר כשחר אוסיעה  
 והוצאתיהו עד למרחק :  
 עוד לקח כנבואה אשפוך  
 והניחותיהו לדורות עולמים :  
 ראו כי לא לי לבדי יגעתי  
 כי אם לכל מבקשי אמת : (c)

## OF LYRIC POETRY.

שִׁיר

### LECTURE XXV.

OF THE HEBREW ODE IN GENERAL ; AND FIRST OF THAT CLASS, THE  
CHARACTERISTICS OF WHICH ARE SWEETNESS AND ELEGANCE.

Lyric poetry originated from the most jocund and pleasing affections of the human mind—The most ancient species of poetry, and almost coeval with human nature itself—Particularly cultivated by the Hebrews—The manner, introduced by David, of singing their odes, highly magnificent—The general character of this species of poetry : its principal distinctions—The first character of the ode, sweetness—What passions and affections it is intended to express : examples from the Psalms—The cxxxiid Psalm in Latin verse.

THOSE compositions which were intended for music, whether vocal alone, or accompanied with instruments, obtained among the Hebrews the appellation of שִׁיר, among the Greeks that of ὕμνος; and both these words have exactly the same power and signification. The Hebrew word, as well as the Greek, appears in course of time to have been appropriated to denote a particular form and species of poetry, with this difference, however, that it is occasionally used with greater latitude.

The ode is in its nature sufficiently expressive of its origin. It was the offspring of the most vivid, and the most agreeable passions of the mind, of love, joy, and admiration. If we consider man on his first creation, such as the sacred writings represent him ; in perfect possession of reason and speech ; neither ignorant of his own nor of the divine nature, but fully conscious of the goodness, majesty, and power of God ; not an unobservant spectator of the beautiful fabric of the universe ; is it not probable, that on the contemplation of these objects, his heart would glow with gratitude and love ? And is it not probable, that the effect of such an emotion would be an effusion of praise to his great Creator, accompanied with a suitable energy and exaltation of voice ? Such indeed were the sensations experienced by the author of that most beautiful Psalm, in which the



whole creation is invited to celebrate the glory of the most high God :

" *Laudate Iehovam coelites ;*

" *Laudate eum in excelsis ;*

" *Laudate eum omnes angeli eius ;*

" *Laudate eum omnes eius exercitus.*"<sup>1</sup>

This hymn is, therefore, most elegantly imitated, and put into the mouth of Adam by our countryman Milton,<sup>2</sup> who is justly accounted the next in sublimity to those poets, who wrote under the influence of divine inspiration. Indeed we scarcely seem to conceive rightly of that original and perfect state of man, unless we assign him some of the aids of harmony and poetical expression, to enable him to testify in terms becoming the dignity of the subject, his devout affections towards his infinite Creator.

Without carrying our researches, however, to objects so remote from human information, if we appeal only to the common testimony of history, we shall find that, among every people not utterly barbarous, the use of music and poetry in the celebration of their religious mysteries, has prevailed from the first periods of society. Of all that sacred melody, which Plato informs us was sometimes established by the solemn sanction of legal authority,<sup>3</sup> he assigns the first rank to that which assumed the form of addresses to the Deity, and was distinguished by the appellation of Hymns. In all the Latin poetry, there is nothing that can boast equal antiquity with the Sallian poems of Numa, composed by that wise and learned monarch on the first institution of his religious rites, and sung by the Salii, whom Dionysius styles "the chorus of the gods of war,"<sup>4</sup> with solemn dancing and other religious ceremonies. There is scarcely any necessity to mention, that the most ancient of all poems extant (those I mean of which the date is ascertained, and which deserve the name of poems) is the thanksgiving ode of Moses on passing the Red Sea, the most perfect in its kind, and the true and genuine effusion of the joyful affections. Thus the origin of the ode may be traced into that of the poetry itself, and appears to be coeval with the commencement of religion, or more properly the creation of man. (A)

The Hebrews cultivated this kind of poetry above every other, and therefore may well be supposed to have been peculiarly excel-

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxlviii.

<sup>3</sup> De Legibus, iii.

<sup>2</sup> Paradise Lost, Lib. v.

<sup>4</sup> Antiq. Rem. ii. 70.

lent in it. It was usual in every period of that nation to celebrate in songs of joy their gratitude to God, their Saviour, for every fortunate event, and particularly for success in war. Hence the triumphal odes of Moses, of Deborah, of David. The schools of the prophets were also, in all probability, coeval with the republic; and were certainly antecedent to the monarchy by many years: there, as we have already seen, the youth, educated in the prophetic discipline, applied themselves, among other studies, particularly to sacred poetry, and celebrated the praises of Almighty God in lyric compositions, accompanied with music. Under the government of David, however, the arts of music and poetry were in their most flourishing state. By him no less than four thousand singers or musicians were appointed from among the Levites, under two hundred and eighty-eight principal singers, or leaders of the band, and distributed into twenty-four companies, who officiated weekly by rotation in the temple, and whose whole business was to perform the sacred hymns; the one part chanting or singing, and the other playing upon different instruments. The chief of these were Asaph, Heman, and Iduthun, who also, as we may presume from the titles of the Psalms, were composers of Hymns.<sup>5</sup> From so very splendid an establishment, so far surpassing every other appointment of the kind, some reasonable conjectures may be formed concerning the original dignity and grandeur of the Hebrew ode. We must remember, too, that we at present possess only some ruins, as it were, of that magnificent fabric, deprived of every ornament, except that splendour and elegance, which, notwithstanding the obscurity that antiquity has cast over them, still shine forth in the sentiments and language. Hence, in treating of the Hebrew ode, we must be content to omit entirely what relates to the sacred music, and the nature of the instruments which accompanied the vocal performance; though there is the utmost probability, that these circumstances were not without their influence, as far as respects the form and construction of the different species of ode. Our information upon these subjects is, indeed, so very scanty, that I esteem it safer to be silent altogether concerning them, than to imitate the example of some of the learned, who, after saying much, have, in fact, said nothing. I shall therefore proceed to a brief inquiry into the general nature and properties of this species of poetry; and after that, we shall be better qualified to judge

<sup>5</sup> 1 CHRON. xxiii. xxv. 1—7. See also 2 CHRON. xxix. 30.



of those specimens which have been transmitted to us by the Hebrew writers.

Of all the different forms of poetical composition, there is none more agreeable, harmonious, elegant, diversified, and sublime, than the ode; and these qualities are displayed in the order, sentiments, imagery, diction, and versification. The principal beauty of an ode consists in the order and arrangement of the subject; but this excellence, while it is easily felt, is difficult to be described, for there is this peculiarity attending it, that the form of the ode is by no means confined to any certain rule for the exact and accurate distribution of the parts. It is lively and unconstrained: when the subject is sublime, it is impetuous, bold, and sometimes might almost deserve the epithet licentious as to symmetry and method: but even in this case, and uniformly in every other, a certain facility and ease must pervade the whole, which may afford at least the appearance of unaffected elegance, and seem to prefer nature to art. This appearance is best preserved by an exordium plain, simple, and expressive; by a display and detail of incidents and sentiments rising delicately and artfully from each other, yet without any appearance of art; and by a conclusion not pointed or epigrammatic, but finishing by a gentle turn of the sentiment in a part where it is least expected, and sometimes as it were by chance. Thus it is not the metre or versification which constitutes this species of composition; for unless all these circumstances be adverted to, it is plain that whatever be the merit of the production, it cannot with any propriety be termed an ode. Many of the odes of Horace are entirely in this form, as well as almost all of those few which our countryman Hannes has left behind him. There are two lyric poems in the *Sylvæ* of Papinius Statius,<sup>6</sup> of which the versification is full, sonorous, and flowing; the sentiments elegant; the diction, if not highly polished, yet ardent and glowing; on the whole, however, the form, the grace, the express manner of the ode is wanting.

The sentiments and imagery must be suitable to the nature of the subject and the composition, which is varied and unconfined by strict rule or method. On familiar subjects they will be sprightly, florid, and agreeable; on sublime topics, solemn, bold, and vivid; on every subject, highly elegant, expressive, and diversified. Imagery from natural objects is peculiarly adapted to the ode; historical

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<sup>6</sup> Lib. iv. *Sylv.* 5 and 7.



common-places may also be admitted, as well as descriptions lively but short, and (when it rises to any uncommon strain of sublimity) frequent personifications. The diction must be choice and elegant, it must be also luminous, clear, and animated; it must possess some elegancies peculiar to itself, and be as distinct from the common language of poetry, as the form and fashion of the production is from the general cast of poetical composition. In this that happiness of expression, for which Horace is so justly celebrated, wholly consists. A sweetness and variety in the versification is indispensable, according to the nature of the language, or as the infinite diversity of subjects may require.

It is much to be lamented, that in treating of the Hebrew ode, we must of necessity be silent concerning the numbers or versification, which (though we are almost totally ignorant of its nature and principles) we have the utmost reason to suppose was accommodated to the music, and agreeable to the genius of the language. In every other respect, as the force and elegance of the language, the beauty and dignity of the sentiments and imagery, the different graces and excellencies of order and arrangement, I shall not hesitate to prefer the Hebrew writers to the lyric poets of every other nation. But lest we should dubiously wander in so extensive a field, it will be proper to prescribe some kind of limit to our course, which may be conveniently done, by distributing all the diversities of this species of composition into three general classes. Of the first class the general characteristic will be sweetness, of the last sublimity; and between these we may introduce one of a middle nature, as partaking of the properties of both. The qualities which may be accounted common to all the three classes, are variety and elegance.(B)

Although the lyric poetry of the Hebrews is always occupied upon serious subjects, nor ever descends to that levity which is admitted into that of other nations, the character of sweetness is by no means inconsistent with it. The sweetness of the Hebrew ode consists in the gentle and tender passions which it excites; in the gay and florid imagery, and in the chaste and unostentatious diction, which it employs. The passions which it generally affects, are those of love, tenderness, hope, cheerfulness, and pensive sorrow. In the sixty-third Psalm the royal prophet, supposed to be then an exile in the wilderness, expresses most elegantly the sentiments of tenderness and love. The voice of grief and complaint is tempered with the consolations of hope in the eightieth Psalm: and the ninety-sec-

and consists wholly of joy, which is not less sincere, because it is not excessive. The sweetness of all these in composition, sentiment, diction, and arrangement, has never been equalled by the finest productions of all the heathen Muses and Graces united. Though none of the above are deficient in imagery, I must confess I have never met with any image so truly pleasing and delightful as the following description of the Deity in the character of a shepherd :

" Iehova est pastor meus, nihil mihi deerit :

" In pascuis herbis ut recubem faciet ;

" Propter aquas leniter fluentes me deducet. "7(c)

How graceful and animated is that rich and flourishing picture of nature, which is exhibited in the sixty-fifth Psalm ! when the prophet, with a fertility of expression correspondent to the subject, praises the beneficence of the Deity in watering the earth and making it fruitful. On a sublime subject also, but still one of the gay and agreeable kind, I mean the inauguration of Solomon, which is celebrated in the seventy-second Psalm, there is such variety and beauty of imagery, such a splendour of diction, such elegance in the composition, that I believe it will be impossible in the whole compass of literature, sacred or profane, to find such an union of sublimity with sweetness and grace.

These few select examples of the elegant and beautiful, in lyric composition, I have pointed out for your more attentive consideration ; and I am of opinion, that in all the treasures of the Muses you will seek in vain for models more perfect. I will add one other specimen, which, if I am not mistaken, is expressive of the true lyric form and character ; and compresses in a small compass all the merits and elegance incidental to that species of composition. It is, if I may be allowed to use the expression of a very polite writer,

*Πιδανος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβάς, ἄκρον ἄκρον.*<sup>8</sup>

The Psalmist contemplating the harmony which pervaded the solemn assembly of the people, at the celebration of one of their festivals, expresses himself, nearly as follows :

O dulce iucundumque ! tribulium

Coetu in frequenti mutua caritas !

O corda qui fraterna nodo

Iungit amor metuente solvi !

Non aura Nardi suavior occupat

Sensus, quæ Aronis vertice de sacro

<sup>7</sup> Psalm xxiii. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Callimach. Hymn. in Apoll. v. 112.

Per ora, per barbam, per ipsas,  
Lenta fluens, it odora vestes :  
Non rore largo laetior irrigat  
Hermona florentem aetherius liquor ;  
Sanctaeque foecundat Sionis  
Uberibus iuga celsa guttis,  
Praesens benigno numine quas fovet  
Iehova sedes ; alma ubi Faustitas  
Testatur, aeternumque magni  
Dia salus domini favorem.(p)



## LECTURE XXVI.

### THE INTERMEDIATE OR MIXED STYLE OF THE HEBREW ODE.

The lyric poetry of the intermediate or mixed style consists of an union of sweetness and sublimity—The ninety-first and eighty-first Psalms explained and critically illustrated—Of the digressions of the Hebrew poets, also of Pindar; not upon the same principle—A criticism upon the seventy-seventh Psalm—The nineteenth Psalm in Latin verse.

HAVING dismissed the subject of the more beautiful species of ode, in order to proceed by proper stages to what I deem the summit of excellence and sublimity in the lyric poetry of the Hebrews, it will be necessary to rest a while, and to bestow some little attention upon that middle style of composition, to which I adverted as constituting one of the grand divisions of this order of poems. This again may be considered as admitting of a subdivision, as including both those lyric compositions, in which sweetness and sublimity are so uniformly blended, that every part of the poem may be said to partake equally of both; and those, in which these qualities separately occur in such a manner, that the complexion of the poem is altogether changeable and diversified. Of each species I shall endeavour to produce an example or two.

The subject of the ninety-first Psalm is the security, the success, and the rewards of piety. The exordium exhibits the pious man placing all his dependence upon Almighty God:

“ Qui habitat in secreto altissimi;

“ Qui in umbram omnipotentis sese recepat:

“ Qui dicit Iehovae, spes mea et propugnaculum meum!

“ Deus meus, in quo confidam:”

And immediately leaving the sentence unfinished, he apostrophizes to the same person, whom he had been describing:

“ Ille profecto te eripiet,

“ E laqueo venatoris, e peste exitiali.”

The imagery that follows is beautiful and diversified, and at the same time uncommonly solemn and sublime:

“ Pennis suis te proteget;

“ Sub alis eius tutus eris:

" Erit tibi pro parma et clypeo eius veritas.

" Non metues a terrore nocturno ;

" A sagitta volante interdiu :

" A peste in tenebris incedente ;

" Ab excidio vastante per meridiem.

" Cadent a late tuo mille ;

" Et a dextra tua decem millia :

" Ad te minime pertinet."

How excellent also are the succeeding images, the guard of angels, the treading under foot the fiercest and most formidable animals ; and afterwards that sudden but easy and elegant change of the persons !

" Quoniam mihi adhaesit, ideo eum eruam ;

" Exaltabo eum, quia nomen meum agnovit."

If any reader will carefully weigh and consider the nature and dignity of this imagery, having due respect at the same time to the principles of the mystical allegory, I am persuaded he will agree with me, that something of a mystical design is concealed under the literal meaning of this Psalm. Without a question, the pious person, the king, or high priest perhaps, who in the literal sense is the principal character of the poem, is meant in reality to represent some greater and sublimer personage.<sup>1</sup> But leaving this part of the subject to the investigation of the divine, I submit it to any critic of true taste and discernment, whether the third ode of the fourth book of Horace (the beauty of which has been justly celebrated, and which bears a great resemblance to that under our consideration) is not greatly excelled by the sacred poet, as well in grace and elegance, as in force and dignity.(A)

The eighty-first Psalm will serve as another example upon this occasion, being pervaded by an exquisite union of sublimity and sweetness. It is an ode composed for the feast of trumpets in the first new moon of the civil year.<sup>2</sup> The exordium contains an exhortation to celebrate the praises of the Almighty with music and song, and (as is frequent in these productions of the Hebrews) is replete with animation and joy, even to exultation :

" Clangite Deo robori nostro ;

" Laetum clamorem tollite Deo Iacobi :"

The different instruments of music are named, as is common in the lyric compositions of all other nations :

<sup>1</sup> The LXX. CHALD. VULG. SYR. ARAB. ÆTHIOP. prefix the name of David to this Psalm. The Jews suppose it to relate to the Messiah. See also MATT. iv. 6, LUKE iv. 10, 11.

<sup>2</sup> See RELAND. Antiq. Heb. iv. 7.



"Efferte psalterium, adhibete tympanum,  
"Cytharam amoenam cum nabllo:"

The trumpet is particularly alluded to, because the solemn use of it on their great festivals was prescribed by the Mosaic law. The commemoration of the giving of the law, associated with the sound of the trumpet (which was the signal of liberty)<sup>3</sup> introduces, in a manner spontaneously, the miseries of the Egyptian bondage, the recovery of their freedom, and the communication with God upon mount Sinai, (the awfulness of which is expressed in a very few words, "the secret place of thunder,") and finally the contention with their Creator at the waters of Meribah. The mention of Meribah introduces another idea, namely, the ingratitude and contumacy of the Israelites, who appear to have been ever unmindful of the favours and indulgence of their heavenly Benefactor. The remainder of the ode, therefore, contains an affectionate expostulation of God with his people, a confirmation of his former promises, and a tender complaint that his favourable intentions towards them have been so long prevented by their disobedience. Thus the object and end of this poem appears to be an exhortation to obedience from the consideration of the paternal love, the beneficence, and the promises of the Deity; and we have seen with how much art, elegance, variety, and ingenuity, this is accomplished. In order to complete the beauty of this composition, the conclusion is replete with all the graces of sentiment, imagery, and diction. The sudden and frequent change of persons is remarkable; but it is by no means harsh or obscure. Some allowance is however to be made for the Hebrew idiom, as well as for the state of the author's mind: he is not under the influence of art but of nature; through the impetuosity of passion, therefore, his transitions are frequent from figure and allusion to plain language, and back again, with a kind of desultory inconstancy.

In the last Lecture I treated in general of the disposition and arrangement of lyric composition, and endeavoured, in some degree, to define its usual symmetry and outline. But on abstruse and difficult subjects, example is of more avail than the utmost accuracy of description. To him, therefore, who wishes to form a correct idea of this kind of poem, I will venture to recommend the Psalm which we have just examined; not doubting, that if he can make himself master of its general character, genius, and arrangement, he will feel perfectly satisfied concerning the nature and form of a perfect ode.

<sup>3</sup> See LEV. xxiii. 24. NUM. xxix. 1. and LEV. xxv. 9, 10.



In both these specimens, the style and cadence of the whole poem flow in one equal and uniform tenour; but there are others, which are more changeable and diversified, more unequal both in style and sentiment. These, although they occasionally incline to the character of sweetness, and occasionally to that of sublimity, may nevertheless (though upon a different principle) be properly classed among the odes of this intermediate style. Such are those which, from a mild and gentle exordium, rise gradually to sublimity, both in the subject and sentiments; such also are those, which commence in a mournful strain, and conclude with exultation and triumph. Such, in fine, are all those in which the style or matter is in any respect diversified and unequal. This inequality of style is perfectly consistent with the nature of lyric composition; for variety is one of the greatest ornaments, if not essentials, of the ode. Since, therefore, for the sake of variety, lyric writers in particular are indulged in the liberty of frequent digressions; that boldness in thus diverging from the subject is not only excusable, but on many occasions is really worthy of commendation. Possibly a brief inquiry into the nature of those liberties which the Hebrew poets have allowed themselves in this respect, or rather into the general method and principles of their lyric compositions, will not be thought altogether unseasonable in this place.

By far the greater part of the lyric poetry of the Hebrews, is occupied wholly in the celebration of the power and goodness of Almighty God, in extolling his kindness and beneficence to his chosen people, and in imploring his assistance and favour in time of adversity: in other words, the usual subjects of these odes are so connected with every part of the sacred history, as to afford ample scope for those digressions which are most pleasing, and most congenial to this species of composition. Thus, whether the theme be gay or mournful; whether the events which they celebrate be prosperous or adverse; whether they return thanks to God their deliverer for assistance in trouble, or with the humility of suppliants acknowledge the justice of the divine correction; the memory of former times spontaneously occurs, and a variety of incidents and circumstances, of times, of seasons, of countries, of nations, all the miracles in Egypt, in the wilderness, in Judea, are presented to their recollection: and all these so naturally connect with the subject, that whatever of ornament is deduced from them, so far from appearing foreign to it, seems rather an essential part of the principal matter. It

may, therefore, be with modesty asserted of the Hebrew ode, that from the nature of the subjects, which it usually embraces, it is possessed of so easy an access to some of the most elegant sources of poetical imagery, and has consequently so many opportunities for agreeable digression; that with unbounded freedom and uncommon variety, are united the most perfect order, and the most pleasing uniformity.

The happy boldness of Pindar in his digressions is deservedly celebrated; but as he was very differently situated from those poets, who are at present under our consideration, so the nature of his subject, and the principles of his composition, are altogether different from theirs; and a different reason is to be assigned for the liberties which he assumed in his lyric productions. We are in no want of materials to enable us to form a perfect judgement of the genius of Pindar; there are about forty of his odes remaining, and the subject of them all is exactly similar. They are all composed in celebration of some victorious chief, whose praise is heightened and illustrated by the circumstances of his birth, ancestry, manners, or country. Since, therefore, this poet was professedly the herald of the Olympic conquerors, unless he had determined to assume great liberty in treating of those topics, and even on some occasions to have recourse to topics very foreign to the principal subject, his poems must have been little better than a stale and disgusting repetition. His apology, therefore, is necessity, and on this ground he has obtained not only pardon but commendation; and many things, which in another poet could neither be defended nor probably endured, in Pindar have been approved and extolled. Lest I should seem to assert rashly on this occasion, I will explain myself by an example. The third of the Pythian odes is inscribed to Hiero, at that time labouring under a grievous and chronical disease. The poet taking advantage of the opportunity to impart a degree of variety to his poem, introduces it with a solemn address, invoking the medical aid of Chiron or Esculapius, if it be possible for them to revisit the earth. But surely, on such an occasion, it would be excusable in no writer but Pindar to expend more than one hundred verses, that is, above half the poem, on the history of Esculapius. Nor indeed could we easily pardon it in Pindar himself, but from the consideration that he had already written an ode (the fourth) in praise of the same Hiero, upon a victory obtained in the Olympic games. But we are willing to excuse the boldness of a poet, who, even with a



degree of rash impetuosity, escapes from such narrow limits into a more spacious field. It is, therefore, no commendation of the Hebrew poets to say, that in this respect they are materially different from Findar; nor does it detract from the merit of Findar to assert, that, from the more favourable circumstances of the Hebrews, their lyric poetry is more genuine and perfect (a).

The seventy-seventh Psalm will afford some illustration of what has been remarked concerning the nature and economy of the Hebrew ode. This Psalm is composed in what I call the intermediate style, and is of that diversified and unequal kind which ascends from a cool and temperate enthusiasm to a high degree of sublimity. The prophet, oppressed with a heavy weight of affliction, displays the extreme dejection and perturbation of his soul, and most elegantly and pathetically describes the conflicts and internal contests to which he is subjected, before he is enabled to rise from the depths of woe to any degree of hope or confidence. In the character of a suppliant he first pours forth his earnest prayers to the God of his hope :

"Vox mea ad Deum fertur, et usque inclinat ;

"Vox mea ad Deum, ut me exaudiat."

But even prayers afford him no sufficient consolation. He next endeavours to mitigate his sorrow by the remembrance of former times; but this, on the contrary, only seems to exaggerate his sufferings, by the comparison of his present adversity with his former happiness, and extorts from him the following pathetic expostulation :

"Num in perpetuum reſiciet me Deus,

"Nec amplius se placabilem praebebit ?

"Num perit in aeternum eius clementia ;

"Defecit promissio in omnes aetates ?

"Num oblitus est misereeri Deus ?

"An solibuit in ira misericordias suas ?"

Again, recollecting the nature of the divine dispensations in chastising man, "the change of the right hand of the Most High;" in other words, the different methods by which the Almighty seeks the salvation of his people, appearing frequently to frown upon and persecute those "in whom he delighteth;" reconsidering also the vast series of mercies which he had bestowed upon his chosen people; the miracles which he had wrought in their favour, in a word, the goodness, the holiness, the power of the great Ruler of the universe; with all the ardour of gratitude and affection, he bursts forth into a strain of praise and exultation. In this passage we are at a loss to admire most, the ease and grace with which the di-



gression is made, the choice of the incidents, the magnificence of the imagery, or the force and elegance of the diction.

" O Deus ! saneta omnino sunt consilia tua :  
 " Quis Deus cum Deo majestate comparandus ?  
 " Tu es Deus ille faciens mirabilia ;  
 " Notum fecisti in populis robur tuum.  
 " Vindicasti brachio populum tuum,  
 " Iacobi et Iosephi posteros.  
 " Viderunt te aquae, O Deus !  
 " Viderunt te aquae, contremuerunt ;  
 " Etiam turbatae sunt Abyssi.  
 " Exundaverunt aquis nubes ;  
 " Fragorem edidit aether ;  
 " Tum vero sagittae tuae discurrerunt :  
 " Vox tonitrus tui in turbine ;  
 " Illuxerunt orbi fulmina ;  
 " Fremuit et commota est tellus."

The other example, to which I shall refer you on this occasion, is composed upon quite a different plan ; for it declines gradually from an exordium uncommonly splendid and sublime, to a gentler and more moderate strain, to the softest expressions of piety and devotion. The whole composition abounds with great variety of both sentiment and imagery. You will, from these circumstances, almost conjecture that I am alluding to the nineteenth Psalm. The glory of God is demonstrated in his works both of nature and providence. By exhibiting it, however, in an entire state, though in modern verse, you will more readily perceive the order, method, and arrangement of this beautiful composition.

## PSALM XIX.

Immensi chorus aetheris,  
 Orbes stelliferi, lucida sidera,  
 Laudes concelebrant Dei,  
 Auctorisque canunt artificem manum.  
 Dulces excipiunt modos  
 Noctem rite dies, noxque diem premens ;  
 Alternoque volubiles  
 Concentu variant perpetuum melos.  
 Et quanquam levibus rotis  
 Labuntur taciti per liquidum aethera,  
 Terrarum tamen ultimos  
 Tractus, alta poli moenia, personat  
 Aeterni sacra vox chori,  
 Concordi memorans eloquio Deum.  
 Coelorum in penetralibus

Soli qui posuit celsa palatia :  
Laetos unde ferens gradus  
Prodit, ceu thalamo sponsus ab aureo ;  
Fidens viribus ut Gigas,  
Praescriptum stadii carpit ovans iter.  
Coeli limite ab ultimo  
Egressus, rediens limitem ad ultimum,  
Emensam relagit viam,  
Foecundisque fovet cuncta caloribus.  
Non lex sancta Dei minus  
Languentes animas vi reficit sacra :  
Puri lumine lex Dei  
Illustrans oculos, et tenebras fugans ;  
Informans animos rudes,  
Coelestique replens corda scientia ;  
Mentes laetificans pias ;  
Confirmans stabili pectora gaudio.  
Illam justitia et fides  
Fixit perpetuam, aeternaque veritas.  
Non illam aequiparat pretio  
Aurum, iam rutilis purius e focis ;  
Non dulcedine, quae recens  
Stillant pressa favis mella liquentibus.  
Fida adstat monitrix suis,  
Et merces eadem magna, clientibus.  
Quis lapsus tamen ah ! suos,  
Quis secreta sinu crimina perspicit ?  
Adsis, O Deus ! O Pater !  
Da caecis veniam, da miseris opem !  
Errantes cohibe gradus,  
Effraenemque animi frange superbiam !  
Solum munere sic tuo  
Mox insons sceleris, purus ero mali :  
Sic O ! sic placeant tibi  
Quae supplex meditor, quae loquor, O Deus ! (c)

## LECTURE XXVII.

### THE SUBLIME STYLE OF THE HEBREW ODE.

The third species of the Hebrew ode, the characteristic of which is sublimity—This sublimity results from three sources—From the general form and arrangement of the poem, exemplified in the fiftieth and twenty-fourth Psalm—From the greatness of the sentiments and the force of the language—The ode of Moses on passing the Red Sea explained and illustrated—The brevity of the Hebrew style—The twenty-ninth Psalm in Latin verse.

SUBLIMITY was mentioned as the characteristic of a third species of the Hebrew ode. But having already treated very copiously of the sublime in general, both as the effect of sentiment and expression, our present investigation must be confined to that which is peculiar to this species of poetry. Now the sublimity of lyric compositions results either from the plan, the order, and arrangement of the poem; or from those common sources which I formerly specified, the sentiments and the style; or, in some cases, from an union of all, when an aggregate perfection is produced from the beauty of the arrangement, the dignity of the sentiments, and the splendour of the diction. I shall endeavour to exhibit a few examples in each kind; and indeed this subject is every way deserving our attention, since it relates to what may be esteemed the perfection of the Hebrew poetry, for its chief commendation is sublimity, and its sublimest species is the ode.

Let us therefore consider, in the first place, what degree of sublimity the mere form and disposition of a lyric poem can impart to a subject not in itself sublime. We have an example of this in the fiftieth Psalm; the subject of which is of the didactic kind, and belongs to the moral part of theology. It is at first serious and practical, with very little of sublimity or splendour: it sets forth, that the divine favour is not to be conciliated by sacrifices, or by any of the external rites and services of religion, but rather by sincere piety, and by the devout effusions of a grateful heart: and yet, that even these will not be accepted without the strictest attention to justice, and every practical virtue. It consists therefore of two parts: in the



first the devout, but ignorant and superstitious worshipper is reprov-  
ed ; and in the second, the hypocritical pretender to virtue and relig-  
ion. Each part of the subject, if we regard the imagery and the  
diction only, is treated rather with variety and elegance, than with  
sublimity ; but if the general effect, if the plot and machinery of the  
whole be considered, scarcely any thing can appear more truly mag-  
nificent. The great Author of nature, by a solemn decree, con-  
vokes the whole human race, to be witness of the judgement which  
he is about to execute upon his people ; the august tribunal is estab-  
lished in Sion :

" Deus Deorum Iehova

" Locutus est et convocavit terram,

" Ab ortu solis ad eius occasum :

" Ex Sione perfectae pulchritudinis Deus exortus est."

The majesty of God is depicted by imagery assumed from the de-  
scent upon mount Sinai, which, as I formerly observed, is one of the  
common-places that supply ornaments of this kind :

" Adveniet Deus noster, nec silebit ;

" Praecedet eum ignis edax,

" Et circumfremet vehemens turbo."

The heavens and the earth are invoked as witnesses, which is a pom-  
pous form of expression common with the Hebrew writers :<sup>1</sup>

" Advocabit coelos ex alto ;

" Et terram, ut iudicio contendat cum populo suo."

At length the Almighty is personally introduced pronouncing his  
sentence, which constitutes the remainder of the ode ; and the ad-  
mirable sublimity and splendour of the exordium is continued  
through the whole. There is in Horace an ode upon a similar sub-  
ject,<sup>2</sup> and it is not enough to say, that he has treated it in his usual  
manner, with elegance and variety, for he has done more than could  
be expected from a person unenlightened by divine truth, he has  
treated it with piety and solemnity. But that high degree of sub-  
limity, to which the Psalmist rises upon such occasions, is only to  
be attained by the Hebrew Muse ; for it is a truth universally ac-  
knowledgeed, that no religion whatever, no poetic history, is provid-  
ed with a store of imagery so striking and so magnificent, so capa-  
ble of embellishing a scene, which may be justly accounted the most  
sublime that the human imagination is able to comprehend.

The next example, which I shall produce, will be found in some

<sup>1</sup> Compare DEUT. xxxii. 1. ISA. i. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. iii. Od. xxiii.

measure different from the former, inasmuch as the subject itself is possessed of the highest dignity and splendour, though still no inconsiderable part of the sublimity is to be attributed to the general plan and arrangement of the poem. The induction of the ark of God to mount Sion by David, gave occasion to the twenty-fourth Psalm.<sup>3</sup> The removal of the ark was celebrated in a great assembly of the people, and with suitable splendour during every part of the ceremony. The Levites led the procession, accompanied by a great variety of vocal and instrumental music; and this ode appears to have been sung to the people when they arrived at the summit of the mountain. The exordium is expressive of the supreme and infinite dominion of God, arising from the right of creation:

"Iehovae est tellus et plenitudo eius;

"Orbis, quique eum incolunt:

"Ille enim supra maria eum fundavit,

"Et supra flumina eum stabilivit."

How astonishing the favour and condescension! how extraordinary the testimony of his love, when he selected from his infinite dominion a peculiar seat, and a people for himself! What a copious return of gratitude, of holiness, of righteousness, and of human virtues, does such an obligation demand! "Behold," says Moses, addressing the Israelites, "the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, is JEHOVAH's, thy God, the earth also, and all that it containeth. Only he had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and their posterity after them, and he chose you above all people, as it is this day."<sup>4</sup> Such is evidently the reasoning of David in the following passage, though the chain of argument is not quite so directly displayed:

"Quis ascendet in montem Iehovae;

"Et quis stabit in sede eius sanctitatis?

"Immunis manibus, et purus corde;

"Qui in vanis numinibus fiduciam suam non reposuit,

"Nec iuravit fallendae fidei consilio.

"Is reportabit benedictionem a Iehova,

"Et iustitiam a Deo eius sospitatore.

"Talis sit gens, quae illum quaerit;

"Quae visit faciem Dei Iacobi."

Thus far is expressive, on the one hand, of the infinite goodness and condescension of God to the children of Israel; and on the other hand, of their indispensable obligation to piety and virtue; since he had deigned to make their nation the peculiar seat of his miraculous

<sup>3</sup> See 2 SAM. vi. 1 CHRON. xv.

<sup>4</sup> DEUT. x. 14—16.



providence, and to honour them with his actual presence. We may now conceive the procession to have arrived at the gates of the tabernacle. While the ark is brought in, the Levites, divided into two choirs, sing alternately the remainder of the psalm. Indeed, it is not impossible that this mode of singing was pursued through every part of the ode; but towards the conclusion the fact will not admit of a doubt. On the whole, whether we regard the subject, the imagery, or style of this composition, it will be found to possess a certain simple and unaffected (and therefore admirable) sublimity:

"Tollite capita vestra, O portae;  
 "Vosque exaltemini, aeternae fores,  
 "Et intrabit rex gloriae.  
 "Quis est rex ille gloriae?  
 "Iehova robustus et potens,  
 "Iehova potens belli.  
 "Tollite capita vestra, O portae;  
 "Vosque exaltemini, aeternae fores,  
 "Et intrabit rex gloriae.  
 "Quis vero est rex ille gloriae?  
 "Iehova armipotens, ille rex est gloriae." (A)

You will easily perceive, that the beauty and sublimity observable in this psalm are of such a peculiar kind, as to be perfectly adapted to the subject and the occasion, and to that particular solemnity for which it was composed. You will perceive, too, that unless we have some respect to these points, the principal force and elegance will be lost; and even the propriety of the sentiments, the splendour of the diction, the beauty and order of the arrangement, will be almost totally obscured. If such be the state of the case in this single instance, it is surely not unreasonable to conclude, that it is not the only one which stands in need of the light of history to cast a splendour on its beauties. It is surely not unreasonable to infer, that much of the harmony, propriety, and elegance of the sacred poetry, must pass unperceived by us, who can only form distant conjectures of the general design, but are totally ignorant of the particular application. Thus of necessity much of the delicacy of sentiment, much of the felicity of allusion, and the force of expression, must, by the hand of time, be cast into shade; or rather I should say, totally suppressed and extinguished. The attentive reader will, indeed, frequently feel a want of information, concerning the author, the age, and the occasion of a poem; still more frequently will he find occasion to lament his own ignorance with respect to many facts and circumstances closely connected with the principal subject,



and on which, perhaps, its most striking ornaments depend.<sup>(B)</sup> This we experience in some degree in the admirable poem of Deborah; and this I seem to experience in the sixty-eighth Psalm, though it appears to have some affinity with the subject of that which we have just examined, since it adopts, in the place of an exordium, that well known form of expression which was commonly made use of on the removal of the ark:<sup>5</sup>

“ Exsurgat Deus; dissipentur eius inimici;  
“ Et fugiant a facie eius qui eum oderunt.”

But almost every part of this most noble poem is involved in an impenetrable darkness. It would otherwise have afforded a singular example of the true sublime; the scattered rays of which, breaking forth with difficulty through the thick clouds that surround it, we yet behold with a mixture of admiration and pleasure.

The most perfect example that I know of the other species of the sublime ode, which I pointed out, (that I mean which possesses a sublimity dependant wholly upon the greatness of the conceptions, and the dignity of the language, without any peculiar excellence in the form and arrangement,) is the thanksgiving ode of Moses, composed after passing the Red Sea.<sup>6</sup> Through every part of this poem the most perfect plainness and simplicity is maintained; there is nothing artificial, nothing laboured, either in respect to method or invention. Every part of it breathes the spirit of nature and of passion: joy, admiration, and love, united with piety and devotion, burst forth spontaneously in their native colours. A miracle of the most interesting nature to the Israelites is displayed. The sea divides, and the waters are raised into vast heaps on either side, while they pass over; but their enemies in attempting to pursue, are overwhelmed by the reflux of the waves. These circumstances are all expressed in language suitable to the emotions which they produced, abrupt, fervid, concise, animated, with a frequent repetition of the same sentiments:

“ Cantabo Iehovae, quia magnifice sese extulit;  
“ Equum equitemque in mare deiecit.”

This constitutes the proem of the ode, and is also repeated occasionally by the female part of the band in the manner of a modern chorus, being briefly expressive of the general subject. The same idea, however, occurs in several parts of the poem, with considerable variation in the language and figures:

<sup>5</sup> Compare NUM. x. 35.

<sup>6</sup> EXOD. xv.

"Pharaonis currus copiasque in mare deiecit,  
 "Et in mari rubro demersi sunt electi eius duces.  
 "Operuerunt eos abyssi;  
 "Descenderunt in profunda, sicut lapis."

And again :

"Dixerat hostis, persequar, adsequar ;  
 "Dividam spolia, exsaturabitur anima mea ;  
 "Stringam gladium, excindet eos manus mea :  
 "Spiritu tuo flavisti ; operuit eos mare ;  
 "Demersi sunt, ut plumbum in aquis ingentibus."

Nor do even these repetitions satisfy the author :

"Quis tui similis inter Deos, Iehova !  
 "Quis tui similis, verendus sanctitate !  
 "Terribilis laudum, faciens mirabilia !  
 "Extendisti dextram ; absorbet eos tellus."

In these examples is displayed all the genuine force of nature and passion, which the efforts of art will emulate in vain. Here we behold the passions struggling for vent, labouring with a copiousness of thought and a poverty of expression, and on that very account the more expressly displayed. To take a strict account of the sublimity of this ode, would be to repeat the whole. I will only remark one quality, which is indeed congenial to all the poetry of the Hebrews, but in this poem is more than usually predominant, I mean that brevity of diction, which is so conducive to sublimity of style. Diffuse and exuberant expression generally detracts from the force of the sentiment ; as in the human body, excessive corpulency is generally inconsistent with health and vigour. The Hebrews, if we contemplate any of their compositions as a whole, may be deemed full and copious ; but if we consider only the constituent parts of any production, they will be found sparing in words, concise and energetic. They amplify by diversifying, by repeating, and sometimes by adding to the subject ; therefore it happens, that it is frequently, on the whole, treated rather diffusely ; but still every particular sentence is concise and nervous in itself. Thus it happens in general, that neither copiousness nor vigour is wanting. This brevity of style is in some measure to be attributed to the genius of the language, and in some measure to the nature of the Hebrew verse. The most literal versions therefore commonly fail in this respect, and consequently still less is to be expected from any poetical translations or imitations whatever.

Most of those qualities and perfections, which have been the subject of this disquisition, will be found in a very high degree in the



twenty-ninth Psalm. The supreme dominion of God, and the awfulness of his power, are demonstrated from the tremendous noise, and the astonishing force of the thunder, which the Hebrews, by a bold but very apt figure, denominate "the voice of the Most High." It is enough to say of it, that the sublimity of the matter is perfectly equalled by the unaffected energy of the style.

## PSALM XXIX.

Regum domino cedite, reges,  
Cedite summi decus imperii.  
Date, quos meruit nomen, honores;  
Adytis Deum adorete sacratis,  
Sonat horrendum magna Dei vox!  
Aethere ab alto Deus intonuit;  
Aequore vasto superintonuit  
Valida, angusta, decora, Dei vox!  
Ruit ingenti turbine cedros,  
Ruit umbrosi cedros Libani.  
Quatitur Libanus, subsilit Hermon;  
Ut vaga lato bucula campo,  
Levis in montibus ut saltât oryx.  
Ruptis rutilant nubibus ignes;  
Deserta tremunt; tremit alta Cades:  
Sylva gemit; querceta laborant;  
Densis nudantur nemora umbris;  
Subitoque iacent perculsa metu  
Hominum corda, agnoscuntque Deum.  
Deus undantem regit Oceanum;  
Rex aeterno sedet in solio:  
Populumque Deus sibi dilectum  
Viribus, opibus, pace beabit.(c)



## LECTURE XXVIII.

### THE SUBLIME STYLE OF THE HEBREW ODE.

*The sublime ode, in which all the constituents of sublimity formerly specified are united—The prophetic ode of Moses, Deut. xxxii.—The triumphal ode of Deborah; the prayer of Habakkuk.—The fourteenth chapter of Isaiah in Latin verse.*

BEFORE we conclude this disquisition concerning the lyric poetry of the Hebrews, it will be proper to produce a few specimens of that kind of ode, which derives sublimity from several united causes, from the diction, the sentiments, the form, and conduct of the poem; and which accumulates, or in a manner condenses and combines, all the beauties and elegancies of this style of composition. The poems to which I shall refer on this occasion, are too well known to require a minute explanation, and indeed almost too noble and perspicuous in themselves to admit of any illustration from criticism; it will therefore be sufficient to notice them in general terms, or, at most, briefly to recommend a few passages, which are perhaps so eminently beautiful as to deserve particular attention.

The first instance I shall mention is that prophetic ode of Moses,<sup>1</sup> which contains a justification on the part of God against the Israelites, and an explanation of the nature and design of the divine judgements. The exordium is singularly magnificent; the plan and conduct of the poem is just, natural, and well accommodated to the subject, for it is almost in the order of an historical narration. It embraces a variety of the sublimest subjects and sentiments, it displays the truth and justice of God, his paternal love, and his unfailing tenderness to his chosen people; and on the other hand, their ungrateful and contumacious spirit. The ardour of the divine indignation, and the heavy denunciations of vengeance, are afterwards expressed in a remarkable personification, which is scarcely to be paralleled from all the choicest treasures of the Muses. The fervour of wrath is however tempered with the milder beams of lenity

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<sup>1</sup> DEUT. xxxii.

and mercy, and ends at last in promises and consolation. When I formerly treated of elevation of sentiment, of the impulse of the passions, of the force of imagery and diction, I could scarcely have avoided touching upon this poem, and drawing some of my examples from it.<sup>2</sup> Not to repeat these, or accumulate unnecessary matter, I will only add one remark, namely, that the subject and style of this poem bear so exact a resemblance to the prophetic as well as the lyric compositions of the Hebrews, that it unites all the force, energy, and boldness of the latter, with the exquisite variety and grandeur of imagery so peculiar to the former.<sup>3</sup>

Another specimen of the perfectly sublime ode will be found in the triumphal ode of Deborah.<sup>4</sup> This poem consists of three parts: first, the exordium; next, a recital of the circumstances which preceded, and of those which accompanied the victory; lastly, a fuller description of the concluding event, the death of Sisera, and the disappointed hopes of his mother, which is embellished with all the choicest flowers of poetry. Of this latter part, I endeavoured to explain at large the principal beauties in a former lecture. About the middle of the poem, it must be confessed, some obscurities occur, and those not of a trivial nature, which impair the beauty of the composition; and what is worse, I fear they will scarcely admit of elucidation, unless we were possessed of some further historical lights. The exordium deserves a particular examination, as well for its native magnificence and sublimity, as because it will serve more completely to illustrate my remarks concerning the digressions of the Hebrew ode. I observed, that the principal passages in the sacred history, which in general constitute the materials of these digressions, are so connected with every subject of sacred poetry, that even in the most eccentric excursions of the imagination, there is little danger of wandering from the main scope and design. The subject of this ode is the triumph of the Israelites over their enemies through the divine assistance, and the establishment of their liberty. At the very opening of the poem this is proposed as the ground-work of it: and after inviting the kings and princes of the neighbouring nations to attend to this miracle of the divine goodness, the author proceeds to celebrate the praise of God, not commencing with the benefit so recently received, but with the prodigies formerly exhibited in Egypt:

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<sup>2</sup> See LECT. xv.

<sup>3</sup> JUD. v.

<sup>4</sup> See LECT. xiii.



" O Iehova, cum e Seire exires,  
 " Cum ex agro Idumaeo procederes;  
 " Terra commota est, stillaverunt coeli,  
 " Stillaverunt aquis nubes;  
 " Fluxerunt montes a facie Iehovae,  
 " Ipse Sinus a facie Iehovae Dei Israël.

The sudden introduction of such important incidents, breathes the free and fervid spirit of the lyric Muse. There is however no defect in the connexion, nor does any degree of obscurity attend the comparison which is implied between that stupendous deliverance and the benefit so lately received.<sup>(A)</sup>

On the same principle the prayer of Habakkuk is constructed;<sup>5</sup> and is a remarkable instance of that sublimity peculiar to the ode, and which is often the result of a bold but natural digression. The prophet foreseeing the judgement of God, and the impending calamities, which were to be inflicted upon his nation by the hands of the Chaldeans, as well as the punishments, which the latter were themselves to undergo; partly struck with terror, partly cheered with hope, he beseeches Almighty God to hasten the redemption of his people:

" Iehova, audivi nuntium tuum, extimui;  
 " Opus tuum, O Iehova, in medio annorum instaura;  
 " In medio annorum notum facias:  
 " In iracundia misericordiae reminiscere."

In this passage, the resemblance between the Babylonish and Egyptian captivities naturally presents itself to the mind, as well as the possibility of a similar deliverance through the power and assistance of God. With how much propriety, therefore, might the prophet have continued his supplications to that all-powerful and all-merciful God; that, as he had formerly wrought so many miracles in favour of his people, he would afford them relief and consolation on the present occasion; and how efficacious a method would it have been, to confirm the fortitude of every pious person, to remind them, that he who had formerly manifested his infinite power in delivering the Israelites from their great afflictions, might, in proper time, employ the same means to rescue them from their present state of suffering? He however totally disregards the formality of this method, probably because he supposed all the above ideas would spontaneously occur to the reader; nor does he labour for access by slow and regular ap-

<sup>5</sup> HABAK. iii.



proaches to the sacred depository of the most splendid materials, but bursts into it at once, and by a sort of unexpected impulse :

"Deus e Themane prodiit,  
 "Et sanctus e monte Paranaeo :  
 "Operuit coelos gloria eius,  
 "Et splendore eius oppleta est tellus."

The prophet, indeed, illustrates this subject throughout with equal magnificence ; selecting from such an assemblage of miraculous incidents, the most noble and important, displaying them in the most splendid colours, and embellishing them with the sublimest imagery, figures, and diction, the dignity of which is so heightened and recommended by the superior elegance of the conclusion, that were it not for a few shades, which the hand of time has apparently cast over it in two or three passages, no composition of the kind would, I believe, appear more elegant or more perfect than this poem.(u)

I will add one remarkable example more of the perfectly sublime ode, which indeed it would be utterly unpardonable to overlook ; I mean, the triumphal song of the Israelites on the destruction of Babylon. It is almost unnecessary to add, that it is in no respect unworthy of Isaiah, whom I cannot help esteeming the first of poets, as well for elegance as sublimity. Having formerly taken up a considerable portion of your time and attention in a minute investigation of its beauties, it is now presented in the modern form of a lyric composition.

#### ISRAELITARVM EHINIKION

IN

#### OCCASVM REGIS REGNIQVE BABYLONICI :

#### ODE PROPHETICA.

ISAIAE CAP. XIV. 4—27.

Ergo insolentis corruit imperi  
 Insana moles ? occidit urbium  
 Regina victrix, nec subacto  
 Effera iam dominatur orbi ?  
 Fastus tyranni contudit impios  
 Iehova vindex, sceptraque ferrea :  
 Qui verberare haud unquam remisso  
 Fregit atrox populos gementes.  
 Nunc ipse diras iure subit vices.  
 Pacata tellus undique gaudio  
 Exultat effraeni, et solutos  
 Ingeminat sine more cantus,

Secura summis stat Libani in iugis  
Ridetque Cedrus : Sicne iaces, ferox !

Iam nemo saevam, te iacente,  
Per nemorum dabit alta stragem.

Te propter imis concita sedibus  
Nigrantis orci magna fremit domus :

En ! luce defunctos tyrannos,  
Sceptringeras soliis ab altis.

Excivit umbras, hospitis in novi  
Occursum euntes. Tene etiam, occupant,

Te viribus, te luce cassum  
Conspicimus, similemque nostri,

Orbumque fastu ? Non comitum frequens  
Deducit ordo ; non tuba, non lyrae

Concentus : at squalentis orci  
Nox premit, et taciturnus horror :

At turba circum plurima vermium  
Fervet, pererrans membra licentius,

Foedumque tabo diffuentes  
Laeta cohors populatur artus.

Vt decidisti coelitus, agminis,  
Eoc, clarum siderei decus !

Vt decidisti, qui domabas  
Victor ovans populos trementes !

Nuper minatus : scandam ego nubila ;  
Stabo Sionis culmine in arduo

Sublimis, et qua spectat arcton  
Arce sacra solium locabo :

Subiecta calcabo astra, premens polum,  
Terramque torquens numine, par Deo.

At dura te lethi profundo  
Vis cohibet barathro iacentem.

Ac forte quisquam conspicit avio  
Deforme corpus littore : stat diu

Incertus, admotoque pronus  
Lumine, te propius tuetur.

Mox insit ; hic est, quem fuga, quem pavor  
Praecessit ? hic, quem terricolis gravem

Strages secuta est, vastitasque ? hic  
Attoniti spoliator orbis ?

Indigna regum colla gravi iugo et  
Duris catenis subiicere insolens,

Lateque diffusa ruina  
Per laceras equitare gentes ?

Reges, tyrannique, et validum ducum  
Manes superbi, non sine gloria

Conduntur omnes, et reposti  
Sedibus in patriis quiescunt :  
At te, supremis mortis honoribus,  
Vili carentem munere pulveris,  
Inter cadentum turpe vulgus,  
Sordidum et indecorem sepulchris  
Egere avitis : te, quia patriae  
Tuisque iniquum ; te, quia gentibus  
Fatale portentum. Malorum  
Nullus honos cineres sequetur ;  
Poena immerentes ob patrium scelus  
Natos manebit. Funditus impiam  
Delete gentem, ne superbos  
Proroget ulterius triumphos :  
Namque ipse consurgam, omnipotens ait,  
Et nomen extinguam Babylonium,  
Stirpenique, natosque, ultimasque  
Reliquias generis nefandi ;  
Vrbemque diris alitibus dabo  
Ferisque habendam : vasta teget palus  
Demersam, et aeterno profunda  
Obruet exitio vorago.  
Dixit sacramentum inviolabile  
Iehova : sic stat consilium ; hic tenor  
Fatique non mutandus ordo,  
Terminus hic stabilis manebit :  
Frangam superbas montibus in meis  
Vires tyrannorum ; eripiam truci  
Iugo laborantes, meorumque  
Ex humeris onus amovebo.  
Iehova dixit : quis dabit irritum ?  
Gentes in omnes hanc pater en ! manum  
Extendit : extentam Iehovae  
Quis poterit cohibere dextram ? (c)



## LECTURE XXIX.

### OF THE IDYLLIUM OF THE HEBREWS.

Besides those poems which may be strictly termed Odes, the general appellation, which is the Hebrew is equivalent to Canticle or Song, includes another species, called by the Greeks the Idyllium.—The reason of this name, and the definition of the poem to which it is appropriated.—The historical psalms in general belong properly to this class.—The intercalary stanza, and the nature of it.—The elegant plan and arrangement of the hundred and seventh Psalm explained: also the ninth chapter of Isaiah, ver. 8, to chap. x. ver. 4.—This passage a perfect specimen of the Idyllium: other examples of the Idyllium no less perfect as to style and form.—The hymn of Cleanthes the Stoic commended.—The hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm in Latin verse.

AMONG those poems which by the Hebrews were adapted to music, and distinguished by the general appellation שיר, there are some which differ in their nature from lyric poetry, strictly so called. It will therefore be more regular to class them with those compositions anciently termed Idylliums, the name and nature of which I shall endeavour to explain.

Whether we are to attribute the invention of the name to the poets themselves, or to the grammarians who revised their works, is difficult to say; but we find some of the Greek poems distinguished by the title *Εἶδη*, which denotes a poem without any certain limitation as to form or subject. Even the odes of Pindar retain that appellation. But if there were any upon lighter subjects, or in a more humble strain, indeed in any respect of an inferior kind, and such as could not be classed under any of the common divisions, they were entitled *Εἰδύλλια*. Thus the small poems of Theocritus, which consist chiefly of Bucolics, intermingled with others of different kinds, are called Idylliums. In the same manner the Latins preferred the name of *Eclogues*, or poems selected from a number of others: and for a contrary and more modest reason, that of *Sylvæ* (or *Woods*) was given to such verses as were hastily composed, and promiscuously thrown together, such as might afford matter for a more accurate revision or for a similar selection. But although the term Idyllium be a vague and general term, which denotes nothing certain relating to the nature of the poem, it still appears by use and

custom to have obtained a certain and appropriated destination ; and perhaps it may not be improperly defined, a poem of moderate length ; of a uniform, middle style, chiefly distinguished for elegance and sweetness ; regular and clear as to plot, conduct, and arrangement. There are many perfect examples of this kind of poem extant in the writings of the Hebrews ; some of which, I presume, it will not be unpleasing singly to point out and explain.

The first of these poems which attract our notice, are the historical Psalms, in celebration of the power and the other attributes of the Deity, as instanced in the miracles which he performed in favour of his people. One of the principal of these, bearing the name of Asaph,<sup>1</sup> pursues the history of the Israelites from the time of their departure from Egypt to the reign of David, particularizing and illustrating all the leading events. The style is simple and uniform, but the structure is poetical, and the sentiments occasionally splendid. The historical, or rather chronological order, cannot be said to be exactly preserved throughout ; for the minute detail of so protracted a series of events could scarcely fail to tire in a work of imagination. The Egyptian miracles are introduced in a very happy and elegant digression, and may be considered as forming a kind of episode. The same subject affords materials for two other Psalms, the hundred and fifth, and the hundred and sixth : the one including the history of Israel, from the call of Abraham to the Exodus ; the other, from that period to the later ages of the commonwealth : both of them bear a strong resemblance to the seventy-eighth, as well in the subject as in the style (except perhaps that the diction is rather of a more simple cast ; ) the mixture of ease and grace, displayed in the exordium, is the same in all.

These Psalms, both in plot and conduct, have a surprising analogy to the hymns of the Greeks. Indeed the Greek translators might very properly have given the title of *TMNOI* to the book of Psalms, as that word agrees much more exactly with the Hebrew title מְנוּחִים, than that which they have adopted. This species of poetry was very early in use among the Greeks, and was almost entirely appropriated to the celebration of their religious rites. The subjects in general were the origin of the gods, the places of their birth, their achievements, and the other circumstances of their history. Such are all the poems of this kind now extant in the Greek ;

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxviii.



such are the elegant hymns of Calimachus, as well as those which are attributed to Homer. The poem of Theocritus, entitled the *Διόσκουροι*, or the praise of Castor and Pollux, is also a genuine hymn, and very elegant in its kind: nor is it improperly classed among the Idylliums, which may be said to include all of this species. But the true form and character of the hymn is excellently expressed by the two choirs of *Salii* (or priests of war) in Virgil:

“qui carmine laudes

“*Herculeas et facta ferunt.*”<sup>2</sup>

Those ancient hymns, which are falsely attributed to Orpheus, are more properly initiatory songs; for they contain “little more than invocations of the gods, which were made use of by those who were initiated in the sacred mysteries of any of the gods.”<sup>3</sup> Ovid, who was both an elegant and a learned poet, united the excellencies of both these species of hymns: for the exordium of the hymn to Bacchus contains the invocations of that god, or, in other words, announces solemnly his name and titles; the remainder celebrates his perfections and achievements.<sup>4</sup>

There is yet another Psalm, which may be enumerated among those of the historical kind, namely, the hundred and thirty-sixth. It celebrates the praises of the Almighty, and proclaims his infinite power and goodness; beginning with the work of creation, and proceeding to the miracles of the Exodus, the principal of which are related almost in the historical order. The exordium commences with this well known distich:

“*Laudate Iehovam, quia bonus,*

“*Quia aeterna est eius benignitas:*”

which, according to Ezra,<sup>5</sup> was commonly sung by alternate choirs. There is, however, one circumstance remarkable attending it, which is, that the latter line of the distich, being added by the second choir, and also subjoined to every verse (which is a singular case) forms a perpetual epode. Hence the whole nature and form of the intercalary verse, (or burthen of the song) may be collected: it expresses in a clear, concise, and simple manner, some particular sentiment, which seems to include virtually the general subject or design of the poem; and it is thrown in at proper intervals, according to the nature and arrangement of it, for the sake of impressing the

<sup>2</sup> Virg. *Æn.* viii. 285.

<sup>3</sup> Jos. Scaliger, Annot. in Hymn. Orph.

<sup>4</sup> *Metamorph.* iv. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Ezra iii. 10, 11.



subject more firmly upon the mind. That the intercalary verse is perfectly congenial to the Idyllium, is evident from the authority of Theocritus, Bion, Moschus, and even of Virgil. I shall add one or two examples from the sacred poetry, which will not lose in a comparison with the most perfect specimens in this department of poetry, which those excellent writers have bequeathed to posterity : and in order to illustrate as well the elegance of the poem in general, as the peculiar force and beauty of the intercalary verse, the order, and conduct of the subject must be particularly explained.

The hundred and seventh Psalm may undoubtedly be enumerated among the most elegant monuments of antiquity ; and it is chiefly indebted for its elegance to the general plan and conduct of the poem. It celebrates the goodness and mercy of God towards mankind, as demonstrated in the immediate assistance and comfort which he affords, in the greatest calamities, to those who devoutly implore his aid. In the first place, to those who wander in the desert, and who encounter the horrors of famine ; next, to those who are in bondage ; to those who are afflicted with disease ; and finally, to those who are tossed about upon the ocean. The prolixity of the argument is occasionally relieved by narration ; and examples are superadded of the divine severity in punishing the wicked, as well as of his benignity to the devout and virtuous ; and both the narrative and preceptive parts are recommended to the earnest, contemplation of considerate minds. Thus the whole poem actually divides into five parts nearly equal ; the four first of which conclude with an intercalary verse, expressive of the subject or design of the hymn :

" *Laudent Iehovam ob eius misericordiam,  
" Et miracula in hominum gratiam edita.*"

This distich also is occasionally diversified, and another sometimes annexed illustrative of the sentiment :

" *Nam satiavit animam fatiscentem,  
" Animamque esurientem implevit bonis.*"  
" *Nam fregit portas aheneas,  
" Et vectes ferreos discidit :*"

The sentiment of the epode itself is sometimes repeated, only varied by different imagery :

" *Laudent Iehovam ob eius misericordiam,  
" Et miracula in hominum gratiam edita :*"  
" *Et offerant sacrificia laudis,  
" Et facta eius laeto cantu enarrent :*"

" Et exaltent eum in coetu populi,  
 " Et in concilio seniorum eum celebrent."

In all these passages, the transition from the contemplation of their calamities, to that of their deliverance, which is made by the perpetual repetition of the same distich, is truly elegant :

" Et invocarunt Iehovam in rebus afflictis;  
 " Ex eorum angustiis eos liberat."

This however does not appear in the least to partake of the nature of the intercalary verse. The latter part of the Psalm, which comprehends a vast variety of matter, concludes with two distichs, expressive of a sentiment, grave, solemn, and practical, and in no respect unworthy the rest of the poem.

There are many other examples to be found in the Psalms ; but it must be confessed, few of them are equal, and none of them superior to this. I shall select another specimen from Isaiah ; and the more willingly, because, in it, as in other passages of the same author, the common division into chapters has greatly obscured that most elegant writer, by absurdly breaking the unity of a very interesting poem, and connecting each part with matter which is totally foreign to the subject. If we unite the conclusion of the ninth chapter with the beginning of the tenth, we shall find a complete and connected prophecy against the kingdom of Israel or Samaria.<sup>6</sup> It is replete with terror and solemnity, and possesses a degree of force and sublimity to which the Idyllium seldom rises ; though it preserves the form of the Idyllium so perfect and express, that it cannot with propriety be referred to any other class. The poem consists of four parts, each of which contains a denunciation of vengeance against the crimes of this rebellious people, vehemently accusing them of some atrocious offence, and distinctly marking out the particular punishment. In the first, the pride and ostentation of the Israelites is reprov'd ; in the second, the obduracy of their spirit, and the general depravation of their morals ; in the third, their audacious impiety, which rages like a flame, destroying and laying waste the nation ; and lastly, their iniquity is set forth as demonstrated in their partial administration of justice, and their oppression of the poor. To each of these a specific punishment is annexed ; and a clause, declaratory of a further reserve of the divine vengeance, is

<sup>6</sup> Isa. ix. 8.—x. 4. In one MS. a vacant space is left after Isa. x. 4, but no space of the same kind at the end of chap. ix. In another MS. after chap. x. 4, a space of one line is interposed. KENNICOTT.



added, which forms the epode, and is admirably calculated to exaggerate the horror of the prediction :

" His omnibus nondum conversa est eius indignatio,

" Sed manus eius adhuc est extenta."

The examples which I have hitherto produced will, at first view, explain their own nature and kind ; there are, however, others, and probably not a few, (in the book of Psalms particularly) which may equally be accounted of the Idyllium species. I have principally in contemplation those, in which some particular subject is treated in a more copious and regular manner, than is usual in compositions strictly lyric. Such is the hundred and fourth Psalm, which demonstrates the glory of the infinite Creator, from the wisdom, beauty, and variety of his works. The poet embellishes this noble subject with the clearest and most splendid colouring of language ; and with imagery the most magnificent, lively, diversified, and pleasing, at the same time select, and happily adapted to the subject. There is nothing of the kind extant, indeed nothing can be conceived, more perfect than this hymn, whether it be considered with respect to its intrinsic beauties, or as a model of that species of composition. Miraculous exertions of the divine power have something in them which at first strikes the inattentive mind with a strong sentiment of sublimity and awe : but the true subject of praise, the most worthy of God, and the best adapted to impress upon the heart of man a fervent and permanent sense of piety, is drawn from the contemplation of his power in the creation of this infinite All, his wisdom in arranging and adorning it, his providence in sustaining, and his mercy in the regulation of its minutest parts, and in ordering and directing the affairs of men. The Greek hymns consisted chiefly of fables, and these fables regarded persons and events, which were neither laudable in themselves, nor greatly to be admired ; indeed I do not recollect any that are extant of this sublime nature, except that of the famous Stoic Cleanthes, which is inscribed to Jove, that is to God the Creator, or, as he expresses himself, " to the Eternal Mind, the Creator and Governor of Nature."<sup>7</sup> It is doubtless a most noble monument of ancient wisdom, and replete with truths not less solid than magnificent. For the sentiments of the philosopher concerning the divine power, concerning the harmony of nature, and the supreme laws, concerning the folly and unhappiness of wicked men, who are unceasingly subject to the pain and perturbation of a

<sup>7</sup> See CUDWORTH, *Intellect. System*, page 432.



troubled spirit; and above all, the ardent supplication for the divine assistance, in order to enable him to celebrate the praises of the omnipotent Deity in a suitable manner, and in a perpetual strain of praise and adoration; all of these breathe so true and unaffected a spirit of piety, that they seem in some measure to approach the excellence of the sacred poetry.

The hymn of David, which I have just mentioned, deservedly occupies the first place in this class of poems; that which comes nearest to it, as well in the conduct of the poem as in the beauty of the style, is another of the same author. It celebrates the omniscience of the Deity, and the incomparable art and design displayed in the formation of the human body; if it be excelled (as perhaps it is) by the former in the plan, disposition, and arrangement of the matter, it is however not in the least inferior in the dignity and elegance of the figures and imagery:

## PSALM CXXXIX.

Tu mihi semper ades, tu me omni ex parte patentem  
Intueris, Deus! et manifesto in lumine cernis.  
Tu me, quicquid ago, quoque vestigia flecto,  
Usque premis; seu luce labor, seu alterna silenti  
Nocte quies redeat: ut pectus et abdita mentis  
Perspicias introrsum insinuans; caecoque recessu  
Exagitas latitantem, arctaque indagine cingis.  
Tu dubiis viridum eluctantia dicta labellis  
Antevenis, primosque animi praeverteris orsus.  
Quippe manu presumque tenes! nudumque, reclusumque,  
Ante, retro, exploras, mihi me praesentior ipso.

O Deus! infinitum atque inscrutabile numen!  
Cuncta sciens mens, ipsa incognita! qua fugiam te,  
Obtusosque tuos et conscia lumina fallam?  
Ascendam coelos? ibi tu: subeam ima barathri  
Tartara? ades: simul haec magno loca numine complas.  
Auroraene procul rutilas ferar ales in oras?  
Occiduine petam fines novus incola ponti?  
Hic etiam tua me ducet manus; hic tua cursum  
Dextera praeveniet cohibens, reprimetque fugacem.  
Ergo petam tenebras, et condar nocte sub atra?  
Demens, qui tenues umbras, et inania vela,  
Sancte! tuis obvertam oculis, densissima cui nox  
Pellucet, tenebraeque ipsae sunt luminis instar.

Te Dominum auctoremque colo; tu hos conditor artus  
Formasti, et gravida texisti matris in alvo.  
Obstupeo, et memet laeta formidine lustror,

Divini monumentum operis ! tu corporis omnem  
Compagem, mersam tenebris et carceris caeco,  
Persipx' ti ; tua solerti per singula ductu  
Dextera iit, tua pinxit acus mirabile textum.  
Ipse rudi invigilans massae, primisque elementis  
Conscius instabas : iussas orientia formas  
Membra minutatim induerunt, quocunque vocares  
Prompta sequi : sua cuique tuis inscripta tabellis  
Effigies erat, atque operis data norma futuri.

Ut mi animum sancto permista horrore voluptas  
Percipit ! ut vano juvat indulgere labori,  
Dum tua facta, Deus, recolo ; tua mente revolve  
Consilia, et numero artificis miracula dextrae !  
Promptius expediam, quot volvant aequora fluctus ;  
Littore vexato quam multae agitentur arenae.  
Usque eadem incassum meditant lumina somnus  
Opprimît ; usque eadem vigilanti cura recursat.

Non tu sacrilegos perdes, Deus ! ite, profani !  
Ite procul, scelerum auctores, caedisque ministri !  
Non ego, sancte, tuos hostes hostilibus iris  
Insequar ? en ! bellum tibi bella parantibus ultro  
Indico ; neque do dextram, neque foedera iungo,  
Tu nunc esto mihi testis ; tu pectoris ima  
Cerne, Deus ! penitusque altos scrutare recessus.  
Excute, siqua mihi caecis concreta medullis  
Haeret adhuc labes, et noxia corda refinge.  
Tum sceleris purum accipias, mittasque salutis  
Aeternum per iter, rectoque in tramite ducas.

## OF DRAMATIC POETRY.

### LECTURE XXX.

#### THE SONG OF SOLOMON NOT A REGULAR DRAMA.

The Platonic division of poetry into the narrative, dramatic, and mixed kinds, of little use; but deserves to be noticed on this occasion, as leading to an accurate definition of dramatic poetry, and clearing up the ambiguity in which the term has been involved by the moderns—Two species pointed out: the lesser, which possesses only the form of dialogue, without the personal intervention of the poet; and the greater, which contains a plot or fable—There are extant some instances of the former in the writings of the Hebrews; but none of their productions seem to have the least title to the latter character, two perhaps excepted; the Song of Solomon, and the Book of Job—Inquiry, whether the Song of Solomon contain a complete plot or fable—It is an Epithalamium: the characters which are represented in it: the poem founded upon the nuptial rites of the Hebrews—The opinion of Bossuet cited and explained; namely, that this poem is a representation of the seven days of festival which succeeded the marriage, and consequently consists of seven parts or divisions—This opinion the most favourable of all, to those who account this poem a regular drama: it however does not prove, that it contains a complete plot or fable—Definition of a dramatic fable—Nothing like it is the Song of Solomon: it is therefore not a perfect drama, but is of the lesser class of dramatic poems—The chorus of virgins bears a great analogy to the chorus of the Greek tragedies; but could not serve as a model for them.

THE ancient critics, following the authority of Plato,<sup>1</sup> have distributed all poetical compositions, according to their form or subject, into three classes, the narrative, the imitative or dramatic, and the mixed. This arrangement is, however, not of much use on the whole; it neither draws a perfect line of distinction between the different species of poems, nor serves to define or explain the nature and form of any. There is scarcely any species of poem perfectly simple in its nature, scarcely any which does not occasionally unite these different modes of expression. The epic indeed may be said to exhibit almost invariably a narration of the mixed kind; and the dramatic necessarily assumes the imitative form. But as other poems may adopt freely the mixed narration; so I do not see any just reason why they should be absolutely prohibited from assuming the dramatic form. Custom, however, we find has so far prevailed, that although the style and manner does not seem necessarily ap-

<sup>1</sup> See PLAT. De Rep. lib. iii.



propriated to any particular subject whatever, the name at least of dramatic has been generally received as distinguishing a particular species of poetry. The present object of inquiry is, therefore, what specimens of this species of composition are extant in the writings of the Hebrews: and in the very first stage of our investigation, some degree of caution will be required, lest the ambiguity of the term, as it has been used by the moderns, should mislead or perplex us.

The term dramatic poetry, as I before observed, is now restricted to two particular species of composition, tragedy and comedy. It was originally, however, of much more extensive signification; it regarded simply the external form; it was properly applied to every poem composed in dialogue, provided that, throughout the whole, the conversation was carried on by the characters themselves, without the intervention of the poet. This mode of composition is exemplified in several of the *Bucolics* of Theocritus and Virgil, and in some of the *Satires* of Horace, and in two of his *Odes*. In order, therefore, to examine the subject more accurately, it will be proper to distinguish two species of dramatic poems; the lesser, in which, by means of dialogue or characters, the manners, passions, and actions of men, are imitated or delineated; and the greater, which contains, moreover, a plot or fable, that is, the representation of some incident or transaction of life, regular or complete, in which events succeed each other in a connected series, and which after various and interesting vicissitudes is wrought up to a perfect conclusion. This latter species includes both tragedy and comedy; and as the plot or fable distinguishes them from the inferior species of dramatic poetry, so the perfect form of dialogue serves to draw the line between them and the epic.

There are abundant examples of the former species of dramatic poetry manifestly extant in the writings of the Hebrews; and perhaps there are many others, which we have not discovered to be of this kind.(A) The sudden change of persons, when by the vehemence of passion the author is led, as it were insensibly, from the narration of an event to the imitation or acting of it, is frequent in the Hebrew poetry; but sometimes the genuine dramatic, or dialogue form, is quite apparent, and the passage will admit of no other explanation. The twenty-fourth Psalm is evidently of this kind, relating, as I formerly endeavoured to prove, to the transferring of the ark to mount Sion; and the whole of the transaction is exhibit-

ed in a theatrical manner, though the dialogue is not fully obvious till towards the conclusion of the poem. That remarkable passage of Isaiah also, deserves notice on this occasion, in which the Messiah, coming to vengeance, is introduced conversing with a chorus as on a theatre :

- CHO. " Quis iste qui venit ab Edomo ?  
 " Tinctis horrendum vestibus a Botsra ?  
 " Iste verendus amictu,  
 " Grandi passu incedens pro maxima vi sua ?  
 MES. " Ego iustitiae praedicator, potens salutis.  
 CHO. " Quare rubet amictus tuus ?  
 " Et vestes tuae ut calcantis in torculari ?  
 MES. " Torcular calcavi solus ;  
 " Et ex populis nemo vir erat mecum :  
 " Et calcavi eos in ira mea ;  
 " Et protrivi eos in aestu meo :  
 " Et respersa est caedes eorum in vestes meas,  
 " Et omnem amictum meum foedavi.  
 " Nam dies ultionis in corde meo est ;  
 " Et annus quo meos redimam venit :  
 " Et circumspexi, neque erat adiutor ;  
 " Et obstupui, neque enim erat sustentator :  
 " Tum mihi salutem praestitit brachium meum,  
 " Et indignatio mea ipsa me sustentavit.  
 " Et conculcavi populos in ira mea,  
 " Et in aestu meo ebrios et attonitos reddidi,  
 " Et caedem eorum derivavi in terram."<sup>2</sup>

The hundred and twenty-first Psalm is of the same kind ; and as it is both concise and elegant, I shall quote it at large. The king, apparently going forth to battle, first approaches the ark of God upon mount Sion, and humbly implores the divine assistance, on which alone he professes to rest his confidence :

- " Attollam oculos meos in montes,  
 " Unde venit auxilium meum.  
 " Auxilium meum est a Iehova,  
 " Qui fecit coelos et terram."

The high priest answers him from the tabernacle :

- " Non sinet labi pedem tuum ;  
 " Non dormitabit, qui te custodit :  
 " Ecce non dormitabit, neque somno succumbet,  
 " Qui custodit Israelem.  
 " Iehova te custodiet ;

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<sup>2</sup> Isa. lxiii. 1—6.



"Iehova te obumbrabit ad dexteram.

"Interdiu sol non te laedet,

"Neque luna per noctem.

"Iehova te custodiet ab omni malo;

"Custodiet etiam animam tuam.

"Iehova custodiet exitum tuum et introitum,

"Ex hoc tempore, et usque in saeculum."

Thus much will suffice for that inferior species of dramatic poetry, or rather that dramatic form which may be assumed by any species of poem. The more perfect and regular drama, that I mean which consists of a plot or fable, will demand a more elaborate investigation.

There are only two poems extant among the writings of the Hebrews which can, on the present occasion, at all be brought into question, the Song of Solomon, and the book of Job; both eminent in the highest degree for elegance, sublimity, and I am sorry to add, obscurity also. The almost infinite labours of the learned have left us but little new to say upon this subject; I shall, however, proceed to inquire, with some degree of minuteness, into the form and structure of each of these poems, and into the reasons which may be alleged in favour of their claim to the appellation of regular dramas. The opinions of other critics shall not pass unregarded, if any remarks or even conjectures occur, which may be likely to throw any light upon the present subject, or to explain or illustrate their principal beauties.

The Song of Songs (for so it is entitled either on account of the excellence of the subject, or of the composition) is an epithalamium, or nuptial dialogue; or rather, if we may be allowed to give it a title more agreeable to the genius of the Hebrew, a *Song of Loves*.<sup>3</sup> It is expressive of the utmost fervour as well as the utmost delicacy of passion; it is instinct with all the spirit and all the sweetness of affection. The principal characters are Solomon himself and his bride, who are represented speaking both in dialogue, and in soliloquy when accidentally separated. Virgins also, the companions of the bride, are introduced, who seem to be constantly upon the stage, and bear a part in the dialogue: mention too is made of young men, friends of the bridegroom, but they are mute persons.<sup>4</sup> This is exactly conformable to the manners of the Hebrews, who had always

<sup>3</sup> Such is the title of Ps. xlv.

<sup>4</sup> CANT. v. 1. viii. 13. See iii. 7—11.



a number of companions to the bridegroom, thirty of whom were present in honour of Samson, at his nuptial feast.<sup>5</sup> In the New Testament, according to the Hebrew idiom, they are called "children (or sons) of the bride-chamber," and "friends of the bridegroom;" there too we find mention of ten virgins, who went forth to meet the bridegroom, and conduct him home:<sup>6</sup> which circumstances, I think, indicate that this poem is founded upon the nuptial rites of the Hebrews, and is expressive of the forms or ceremonial of their marriages. In this opinion, indeed, the harmony of commentators is not less remarkable, than their disagreement concerning the general economy and conduct of the work, and the order and arrangement of the several parts. The present object of inquiry, however, is only whether any plot or fable be contained or represented in this poem; and upon this point, the most probable opinion is that of the celebrated Bossuet,<sup>7</sup> a critic, whose profound learning will ever be acknowledged, and a scholar whose exquisite taste will ever be admired. I shall endeavour, as briefly as possible, to explain his sentiments concerning the form and conduct of this poem, whence we shall probably be enabled to decide in some measure concerning the equity of its claim to the title of a regular drama.

It is agreed on all parts, that the nuptial feast, as well as every other solemn rite among the Hebrews, was hebdomadal.<sup>8</sup> Of this circumstance M. Bossuet has availed himself in the analyzation of the poem, and he accordingly divides the whole into seven parts, corresponding to the seven days of its supposed duration. The vicissitudes of day and night are marked with some degree of distinctness; he therefore makes use of these as indexes, to point to the true division of the parts. The nuptial banquet being concluded, the bride is led in the evening to her future husband; and here commences the nuptial week; for the Hebrews, in their account of time, begin always at the evening.<sup>9</sup> The bridegroom, who is represented in the character of a shepherd, goes forth early in the morning to the accustomed occupations of a rural and pastoral life; the bride presently awaking, and impatient of his absence, breaks out into a soliloquy full of tenderness and anxiety, and this incident forms the exordium of the poem. The early departure of the bride-

<sup>5</sup> JUD. xiv. 11.    <sup>6</sup> JOHN iii. 29. MATT. ix. 15. LIGHTFOOT ON MATT. *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> See BOSSUET, *Pref. et Comment. in CANT.*

<sup>8</sup> See GEN. xxix. 27. JUD. xiv. 12.

<sup>9</sup> See GEN. i. 5, etc.

groom seems to be according to custom ; hence that precaution so frequently and so anxiously repeated, not to disturb his beloved :

"Obtestor vos, Solymitides,  
 "Per capreolas, perque cervas agrestes,  
 "Ne excitetis, neve expergefaciatis,  
 "Dilectissimam, donec ipsa velit." <sup>10</sup>

Nor less frequent is the following exclamation of the virgins :

"Quaenam est Illa, quae ascendit e deserto ?—  
 "Quaenam est Illa, quae prospectat, ut aurora ?" <sup>11</sup>

In these terms they seem to greet the bride when she first comes out of her chamber : and these several expressions have some allusion to the early time of the morning. The night is also sometimes mentioned in direct terms, and sometimes it is indirectly denoted by circumstances. <sup>12</sup> If therefore any reader, admitting these indications of time, will carefully attend to them, he cannot, I think, but perceive, that the whole of the work consists of seven parts or divisions, each of which occupies the space of a day. <sup>13</sup> The same critic adds, that he can discover the last day to be clearly distinguished as the Sabbath ; for the bridegroom does not then, as usual, go forth to his rural employments, but proceeds from the marriage chamber into public with his bride. <sup>14</sup> Such are the sentiments of this learned person ; to which I am inclined to accede, not as absolute demonstration, but as a very ingenious and probable conjecture upon an extremely obscure subject : I follow them therefore as a glimmering of light, which beams forth in the midst of darkness, where it would be almost unreasonable to hope for any clearer illumination.

This opinion is the most favourable of all to those who account the Song of Solomon a regular drama ; for this arrangement seems to display, in some measure, the order and method of a theatrical

<sup>10</sup> Chap. ii. 7. iii. 5. viii. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Chap. iii. 6. viii. 5. vi. 10.

<sup>12</sup> Chap. iii. 1. v. 2. ii. 6. viii. 3.

<sup>13</sup> The following is the distribution of the work according to BOSSUET :

1st Day :	Chap. i,	— ii.	6.
2d — :	Chap. ii.	7, —	17.
3d — :	Chap. iii.	— v.	1.
4th — :	Chap. v.	2, — vi.	9.
5th — :	Chap. vi.	10, — vii.	11.
6th — :	Chap. vii.	12, — viii.	3.
7th — :	Chap. viii.	4, —	14.

<sup>14</sup> Chap. viii. 5.



representation. But if they make use of the term dramatic according to the common acceptation of the word, this poem must be supposed to contain a fable, or entire and perfect plot or action, of a moderate extent, in which the incidents are all connected, and proceed regularly from one another, and which, after several vicissitudes, is brought to a perfect conclusion. But certainly the bare representation of a nuptial festival cannot in any respect answer to this definition. We are, it is true, very imperfectly instructed in the particular rites and ceremonies of the Hebrew marriages; but we have no reason to suppose, that in their common and usual form they were possessed of such variety and vicissitude of fortunes and events, as to afford materials for a regular plot or fable. The whole was one even tenour of joy and festivity. An unexpected incident might indeed sometimes occur to interrupt the usual order, and to produce such a change of fortune, as might afford a basis for a dramatic story; and if any such incident is to be found in the poem at present under our consideration, it will establish its claim to that appellation. But the truth is, the keenest inspection of criticism can, throughout the whole, discover no such incident or circumstance; the state of affairs is uniformly the same from the beginning to the end; a few light fluctuations of passion excepted, such as the anxiety of absence, and the amenity and happiness which the lovers enjoy in each other's presence. The bride laments the absence of her beloved;<sup>15</sup> she seeks, she finds him, she brings him home; again he is lost, she seeks him again, but with different success; she complains, languishes, indites messages to be delivered to him, she indulges her passion in a full and animated description of his person. All this, however, bears no resemblance to a regular plot, nor affords the piece any fairer title to the appellation of a perfect drama, than the dramatic Eclogues of Theocritus and Virgil, in which the loves, the amusements, and the emulations of shepherds are depicted, and which no critic has ever classed with the regular fables of Euripides and Terence. Thus far therefore we may safely admit, that the Song of Solomon possesses indeed the dramatic form, and therefore belongs properly to that inferior species, which was mentioned in the former part of this lecture; but that it cannot, upon any fair grounds of reason, be accounted a regular drama.

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<sup>15</sup> Chap. iii. and v.



There is however one circumstance in which this poem bears a very near affinity to the Greek drama : the chorus of virgins seems in every respect congenial to the tragic chorus of the Greeks. They are constantly present, and prepared to fulfil all the duties of advice and consolation : they converse frequently with the principal characters ; they are questioned by them, and they return answers to their inquiries ; they take part in the whole business of the poem, and I do not find that upon any occasion they quit the scene. Some of the learned have conjectured, that Theocritus, who was contemporary with the seventy Greek translators of the Scriptures, and lived with them in the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus, was not unacquainted with the beauties of this poem, and that he has almost literally introduced some passages from it into his elegant Idylliums.<sup>16</sup> It might also be suspected, that the Greek tragedians were indebted for their chorus to this poem of Solomon, were not the probabilities on the other side much greater, that the Greeks were made acquainted with it at too late a period ; and were it not evident, that the chorus of the Greeks had a very different origin ; were it not evident indeed that the chorus was not added to the fable, but the fable to the chorus.(B)

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<sup>16</sup> Compare CANT. i. 4. vi. 10, with THEOC. xviii. 30. 26 ; CANT. iv. 11, with THEOC. xx. 26 ; CANT. viii. 6, 7, with THEOC. xxiii. 23—26.

## LECTURE XXXI.

### ON THE SUBJECT AND STYLE OF SOLOMON'S SONG.

The question debated, whether the Song of Solomon is to be taken in a literal or allegorical sense: the allegorical sense defended upon the grounds of the parabolic style.—The nature and ground-work of this allegory explained.—The fastidiousness of those critics reprov'd, who pretend to take offence at the freedom of some of those images which are found in the Sacred Writings; the nature of those images explained.—The allegorical interpretation confirmed by analogical arguments: not equally demonstrable from the internal structure of the work itself.—This allegory of the third or mystical species; the subject literally relating to the nuptials of Solomon.—Two cautions to be observed by commentators.—The style of the poem pastoral: the characters are represented as pastoral: how agreeable this to the manners of the Hebrews.—The elegance of the topics, descriptions, comparisons of this poem: illustrated by examples.

HAVING, in my last Lecture, briefly explained what appeared to me most probable, among the great variety of opinions which have prevailed, concerning the conduct and economy of the Song of Solomon, a question next presents itself for our investigation, not less involved in doubt and obscurity, I mean the real nature and subject of the poem. Some are of opinion, that it is to be taken altogether in a literal sense, and others esteem it wholly allegorical. There is no less disagreement also among those who consider it as allegorical; some conceive it to be no more than a simple allegory, while others place it in that class which I have denominated mystical, that, namely, which is founded upon the basis of history. I would gladly, from the first, have considered this question as foreign to my undertaking, and would have avoided it as involved in the deepest obscurity, had I not, in the former part of these Lectures, been under the necessity of remarking the connexion between the different kinds of allegory and the principles of the sacred poetry; had I not also found it necessary to advert to all the peculiarities of the parabolic style, the most obvious property of which is to express by certain images, chiefly adopted from natural objects, the analogy and application of which is regularly preserved, those ideas and doctrines which are more remote from common apprehension. This I cannot



help considering as a matter of the utmost importance, in enabling us to understand properly the poetry of the Hebrews ; and upon this point much of the present argument will be found to depend.

I shall on this, as well as upon the last occasion, proceed with that cautious reserve which I think prudent and necessary on so obscure a subject ; and since certainty is not to be obtained, I shall content myself with proposing to your consideration what appears least improbable. In the first place then I confess, that by several reasons, by the general authority and consent of both the Jewish and Christian churches ; and still more, by the nature and analogy of the parabolic style, I feel irresistibly inclined to that side of the question which considers this poem as an entire allegory. Those, indeed, who have considered it in a different light, and who have objected against the inconsistency and meanness of the imagery, seem to be but little acquainted with the genius of the parabolic diction : for the removal, therefore, of these difficulties, which I find have been the cause of offence to many persons, I shall beg leave to trespass upon your attention, while I explain somewhat more accurately the nature of this allegory, and its analogy with other productions of the Hebrew poets.

The narrowness and imbecility of the human mind being such as scarcely to comprehend or attain a clear idea of any part of the Divine Nature by its utmost exertions, God has condescended, in a manner, to contract the infinity of his glory, and to exhibit it to our understandings under such imagery as our feeble optics are capable of contemplating. Thus the Almighty may be said to descend, as it were, in the Holy Scriptures, from the height of his majesty, to appear on earth in a human shape, with human senses and affections, in all respects resembling a mortal—"with human voice and human form." This kind of allegory is called anthropopathy, and occupies a considerable portion of theology, properly so called, that is, as delivered in the Holy Scriptures. The principal part of this imagery is derived from the passions ; nor indeed is there any one affection or emotion of the human soul which is not, with all its circumstances, ascribed in direct terms, without any qualification whatever, to the supreme God ; not excepting those in which human frailty and imperfection is most evidently displayed, anger and grief, hatred and revenge. That love also, and that of the tenderest kind, should bear a part in this drama, is highly natural and perfectly consistent. Thus, not only the fondness of paternal affection is attributed to



God, but also the force, the ardour, and the solicitude of conjugal attachment, with all the concomitant emotions, the anxiety, the tenderness, the jealousy incidental to this passion.

After all, this figure is not in the least productive of obscurity; the nature of it is better understood than that of most others: and although it be exhibited in a variety of lights, it constantly preserves its native perspicuity. A peculiar people, of the posterity of Abraham, was selected by God from among the nations, and he ratified his choice by a solemn covenant. This covenant was founded upon reciprocal conditions; on the one part love, protection, and support; on the other, faith, obedience, and worship pure and devout. This is that conjugal union between God and his church; that solemn compact so frequently celebrated by almost all the sacred writers under this image. It is indeed a remarkable instance of that species of metaphor which Aristotle calls analogical;<sup>1</sup> that is, when in a proposition consisting of four ideas, the first bears the same relation to the second as the third does to the fourth, and the corresponding words may occasionally change their places without any injury to the sense. Thus in this form of expression God is supposed to bear exactly the same relation to the church as a husband to a wife; God is represented as the spouse of the church, and the church as the betrothed of God. Thus also, when the same figure is maintained with a different mode of expression, and connected with different circumstances, the relation is still the same: thus the piety of the people, their impiety, their idolatry, and rejection, stand in the same relation with respect to the sacred covenant; as chastity, modesty, immodesty, adultery, divorce, with respect to the marriage contract. And this notion is so very familiar and well understood in Scripture, that the word adultery (or whoredom) is commonly used to denote idolatrous worship, and so appropriated does it appear to this metaphorical purpose, that it very seldom occurs in its proper and literal sense.

Let us only observe how freely the sacred poets employ this image, how they dwell upon it, in how many different forms they introduce it, and how little they seem to fear exhibiting it with all its circumstances. Concerning the reconciliation of the church to Almighty God, and its restoration to the divine favour, amongst many images of a similar nature, the elegant Isaiah introduces the following:

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<sup>1</sup> POET. xxii. and RHET. iii. 3.

" Nam Maritus tibi erit Creator tuus ;  
 " Nomen ei Iehova exercituum :  
 " Et redemptor tuus sanctus Israël ;  
 " Deus universae terrae vocabitur."<sup>2</sup>

And in another passage in the form of a comparison :

" Nam ut Iuvenis uxorem ducit virginem,  
 " Ita te uxorem ducet conditor tuus :  
 " Et ut sponsus in sponsa gaudet,  
 " Ita in te gaudebit Deus tuus."<sup>3</sup>(A)

The same image a little diversified, and with greater freedom of expression, as better adapted to the display of indignation, is introduced by Jeremiah, when he declaims against the defection of the Jews from the worship of the true God.<sup>4</sup> Upon the same principle the former part of the prophecy of Hosea ought also to be explained ; and whether that part of the prophecy be taken in the literal and historical sense, or whether it be esteemed altogether allegorical, still the nature and principles of this figure, which seems consecrated in some measure to this subject, will evidently appear. None of the prophets, however, have applied the image with so much boldness and freedom as Ezekiel, an author of a most fervid imagination, who is little studious of elegance, or cautious of offending ; in-somuch, that I am under some apprehension of his incurring no inconsiderable share of censure from those over-delicate critics who have been emitted from the Gallic schools.(B) His great freedom in the use of this image is particularly displayed in two parables, in which he describes the ingratitude of the Jews and Israelites to their great Protector, and their defection from the true worship, under imagery assumed from the character of an adulterous wife, and the meretricious loves of two unchaste women.<sup>5</sup> If these parables (which are put into the mouth of God himself, with a direct allegorical application, and in which it must be confessed, that delicacy does not appear to be particularly studied) be well considered, I am persuaded, that the Song of Solomon (which is in every part chaste and elegant) will not appear unworthy of the divine sense in which it is usually taken, either in matter or style, or in any degree inferior either in gravity or purity to the other remains of the sacred poets. To these instances I may add the forty-fifth Psalm, which is a sacred epithalamium, of the allegorical application of which, to the

<sup>2</sup> ISA. liv. 5.

<sup>3</sup> See JOHN iii. 29.

<sup>4</sup> JER. iii. 1, etc.

<sup>5</sup> EZEK. xvi. and xxiii.



union between God and the church, I do not find that any doubt has hitherto been entertained ; though many suspect it, and not without good reason, to have been produced upon the same occasion, and with the same relation to a real fact, as the Song of Solomon. Neither ought we to omit, that the writers of the New Testament have freely admitted the same image in the same allegorical sense with their predecessors, and have finally consecrated it by their authority.<sup>6</sup>

These reasons appear to me sufficient to remove those objections founded on the meanness of the imagery, which render many critics averse to the allegorical explanation of this poem. I shall not attempt to confirm this opinion by any internal evidence from the poem itself, as I do not scruple to confess myself deterred by the great difficulty of the undertaking. For though induced by the most ancient authority, and still more by the analogy of this with other similar allegories contained in the Hebrew writings, I am fully persuaded of the truth of what I have advanced ; yet I am still apprehensive, that it would be extremely difficult to establish the hypothesis by direct arguments from the internal structure of the work itself.(c)

But if, after all, it be allowed that this work is of the allegorical kind, another question remains, namely, to which of the three classes of allegory already specified, it properly belongs. The first of these, you will recollect, was the continued metaphor ; the second the parable, strictly so called ; and the third, the mystical allegory, which, under the veil of some historical fact, conceals a meaning more sacred and sublime. I must confess, that I am clearly of the same opinion with those who assign this production to the latter class of allegories ; the reason of which will be evident, if it be admitted that there is any thing in the poem at all allegorical ; since there can scarcely be any doubt that it relates in a literal sense to the nuptials of Solomon. Those also who are conversant with the writings of the Hebrew poets, will easily perceive how agreeable the conduct of this poem is to the practice of those writers, who are fond of annexing a secret and solemn sense to the obvious meaning of their compositions, and of looking through the medium of human affairs to those which are celestial and divine. The subject of the

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<sup>6</sup> See MATT. ix. 15, JOHN iii. 29, 2 COR. xi. 2, EPH. v. 23, etc. REV. xix. 7, xxi. 2, xxii. 17.



Canticles appears to be the marriage feast of Solomon (who was both in name and in reality the prince of peace;) his bride is also called *Solomitis*,<sup>7</sup> the same name with a feminine termination; though the later Jews have strangely disguised and obscured it by a vicious pronunciation: for Solomon and Solomitis have evidently the same relation to each other, as the Latin names Caius and Caia. This circumstance of the names was not to be disregarded, since they seem to have a very strict connexion, and to afford a very distinct intimation of the latent meaning: for to what purpose innovate the usual practice of the Hebrews, by assigning to the wife of Solomon the same name, unless from a regard to the force and meaning of the word? Unless it was meant to indicate, that the name of Solomon himself was not without importance, not without some further aim than merely the distinction of the person? Who this wife of Solomon was, is not clearly ascertained: but some of the learned have conjectured, with an appearance of probability, that she was the daughter of Pharaoh, to whom Solomon was known to be particularly attached. May we not, therefore, with some shadow of reason, suspect, that under the allegory of Solomon choosing a wife from the Egyptians, might be darkly typified that other Prince of Peace, who was to espouse a church, chosen from among the Gentiles?

Concerning the explanation of this allegory, I will only add, that, in the first place, we ought to be cautious of carrying the figurative application too far, and of entering into a precise explication of every particular: as these minute investigations are seldom conducted with sufficient prudence not to offend the serious part of mankind, learned as well as unlearned. Again, I would advise, that this production be treated according to the established rules of this kind of allegory, fully and expressly delivered in the Sacred Writings, and that the author be permitted to be his own interpreter. In this respect, the errors of critics and divines have been as numerous as they have been pernicious.<sup>8</sup> Not to mention other absurdities, they have taken the allegory, not as denoting the universal state of the church, but the spiritual state of individuals; than which, nothing can be more inconsistent with the very nature and ground-work of the allegory itself, as well as with the general practice of the Hebrew poets on these occasions.

<sup>7</sup> סְלוֹמִיטִיס, סְלוֹמִיטִיס which may be expressed in Greek *Solomon, Solomitis*.  
CANT. viii. 1.

<sup>8</sup> BERNARD, DURHAM, SANCTIUS, BOSSUET, and others.

It remains to offer a few remarks upon the style of this poem. I formerly intimated that it was of the pastoral kind; since the two principal personages are represented in the character of shepherds.<sup>9</sup> This circumstance is by no means incongruous to the manners of the Hebrews, whose principal occupation consisted in the care of cattle;<sup>10</sup> nor did they consider this employment as beneath the dignity of the highest characters. Least of all, could it be supposed inconsistent with the character of Solomon, whose father was raised from the sheep-fold to the throne of Israel. The pastoral life is not only most delightful in itself, but, from the particular circumstances and manners of the Hebrews, is possessed of a kind of dignity. In this poem it is adorned with all the choicest colouring of language, with all the elegance and variety of the most select imagery. "Every part of the Canticles," says a modern writer, "abounds in poetical beauties; the objects, which present themselves on every side, are the choicest plants, the most beautiful flowers, the most delicious fruits, the bloom and vigour of spring, the sweet verdure of the fields, flourishing and well-watered gardens, pleasant streams, and perennial fountains. The other senses are represented as regaled with the most precious odours, natural and artificial; with the sweet singing of birds, and the soft voice of the turtle; with milk and honey, and the choicest of wine. To these enchantments are added all that is beautiful and graceful in the human form, the endearments, the caresses, the delicacy of love; if any object be introduced which seems not to harmonize with this delightful scene, such as the awful prospect of tremendous precipices, the wildness of the mountains, or the haunts of the lions; its effect is only to heighten by the contrast the beauty of the other objects, and to add the charms of variety to those of grace and elegance."<sup>11</sup> In the following passage the force and splendour of description is united with all the softness and tenderness of passion:

"Surge, age, *deliciae meae*!

"*Formosa mea*, et veni!

"*Ecce enim Hyems praeteriit*;

"*Pluvia tempestas transiit, abiit*:

"*Apparent humi flosculi*;

"*Tempus adest cantus avium*;

"*Et vox turturis in terra nostra auditur*.

<sup>9</sup> See chap. i. 7, 8.

<sup>10</sup> See GEN. xlv. 32—34.

<sup>11</sup> BOSSUET, Preface to the Canticles.



- "Ficus dulci succo condivit fructus suos,  
 "Et vineae floescentes odorem diffundunt.  
 "Surge, áge, deliciae meae!  
 "Formosa mea, et veni!"<sup>12</sup>

The following comparisons abound in sweetness and delicacy:

- "Quam iucundi sunt amores tui, o soror mea, o sponsa!  
 "Quanto dulciores amores tui vino,  
 "Et odor unguentorum tuorum omnibus aromatis!  
 "Labia tua, o sponsa, sunt favi stillantes;  
 "Mel et lac sub lingua tua;  
 "Et odor vestium tuarum, sicut odor Libani."<sup>13</sup>

There are some others which demand a more accurate investigation.

- "Capilli tui sicut grex caprarum,  
 "E monte Galaado emicantium."<sup>14</sup>

The hair of the goats was soft, smooth, of a yellow cast, like that of the bride;<sup>15</sup> her beautiful tresses are compared with the numerous flocks of goats which covered this flourishing mountain from the top to the bottom.

- "Dentes tui sicut grex ovium praeclare aequalium,  
 "Quae e lavacro ascendunt:  
 "Omnes inter se gemellae,  
 "Neque est ulla pari suo orba."

The evenness, whiteness, and unbroken order of the teeth, is admirably expressed.

- "Labella tua sicut filum coccineum;  
 "Et decorus sermo tuus."

That is, thin and ruby-coloured, such as add peculiar graces to the sweetness of the voice.

- "Genae tuae, sicut sectio mali punici,  
 "Cinnamomi tuis intermicantes."

Partly obscured, as it were, by her hair, and exhibiting a gentle blush of red from beneath the delicate shade, as the seeds of the pomegranate (the colour of which is white tinged with red) surrounded by the rind.

- "Collum tuum, sicut turris Davidis,  
 "In pinnas extracta;  
 "In qua pendent mille clypei,  
 "Arma virorum fortium."

The neck is described as long, erect, slender, according to the

<sup>12</sup> Chap. ii. 10—13.

<sup>13</sup> Chap. iv. 10, 11.

<sup>14</sup> Chap. iv. 1—5.

<sup>15</sup> See chap. vii. 5, and compare 1 Sam. xix. 13, 16 with xvi. 12. Consult BOCHART, Hieroz. part i. lib. ii. 51.



nicest proportion ; decorated with gold, gems, and large pearls. It is compared with some turret of the citadel of Sion, more lofty than the rest, remarkable for its elegance, and not less illustrious for its architecture than for the trophies with which it was adorned, being hung round with shields and other implements of war.

"Duae mamillae tuae, sicut duo hinnulei,

"Gemelli capreolae,

"Pascentes inter lilia."

Delicate and smooth, standing equally prominent from the ivory bosom. The animal with which they are compared is an animal of exquisite beauty, and from that circumstance it derives its name in the Hebrew. Nothing can, I think, be imagined more truly elegant and poetical than all these passages, nothing more apt or expressive, than these comparisons. The discovery of these excellencies, however, only serves to increase our regret for the many beauties which we have lost, the perhaps superior graces, which extreme antiquity seems to have overcast with an impenetrable shade.(v)

## LECTURE XXXII.

### OF THE POEM OF JOB.

In order to criticise the book of Job with any degree of satisfaction to his auditors, the critic must explain his own sentiments concerning the work in general—The book of Job a singular composition, and has little or no connexion with the affairs of the Hebrews—The seat of the history is Idumæa; and the characters are evidently Idumæan, of the family of Abraham: the author appears to be an Idumæan, who spoke the Hebrew as his vernacular tongue—Neither Elihu nor Moses, rather Job himself, or some contemporary—This appears to be the oldest book extant: founded upon true history, and contains no allegory—Although extremely obscure, still the general subject and design are sufficiently evident—A short and general analysis of the whole work; in which the obscurer passages are brought as little as possible in question—The deductions from this disquisition—1. The subject of the controversy between Job and his friends—2. The subject of the whole poem—3. Its end or purpose—All questions not necessarily appertaining to this point, to be avoided.

SUCH a diversity of opinions has prevailed in the learned world concerning the nature and design of the poem of Job, that the only point in which commentators seem to agree, is the extreme obscurity of the subject. To engage, therefore, in an undertaking on which so much erudition has been expended, to tread the same paths which so many have already traversed in vain, may seem to require some apology for the temerity, not to say the presumption, of the attempt. Though I might allege, that the authority of the most learned men is lessened in some measure by the discordance of their opinions; and that therefore the failure of others is the more readily to be excused. I will, however, make use of no such defence, but will entrench myself rather in the necessity and in the nature of my present undertaking. I pretend not to any new discoveries; I presume not to determine the subtle controversies of the learned; I scarcely venture to indulge a hope of being able to illustrate any obscurities. My sole intention is to collect, from such passages as appear the least intricate, the most probable conjectures: and what I conceive to have any tolerable foundation in fact, that I mean to propose, not as demonstration, but as opinion only. I proceed in this manner upon the principle, that, considering the great discordance of sentiments upon this subject, it would be impossible for any man to discourse with a sufficient degree of accuracy and perspicuity upon the struc-



ture and parts of this poem, unless he previously explained his own ideas concerning the scope and purport of the work in general.

The book of Job appears to me to stand single and unparalleled in the sacred volume. It seems to have little connexion with the other writings of the Hebrews, and no relation whatever to the affairs of the Israelites. The scene is laid in Idumæa; the history of an inhabitant of that country is the basis of the narrative; the characters who speak are Idumæans, or at least Arabians of the adjacent country, all originally of the race of Abraham.<sup>(A)</sup> The language is pure Hebrew, although the author appears to be an Idumæan; for it is not improbable that all the posterity of Abraham, Israelites, Idumæans, and Arabians, whether of the family of Keturah or Ishmael, spoke for a considerable length of time one common language. That the Idumæans, however, and the Temanites in particular, were eminent for the reputation of wisdom, appears by the testimony of the prophets Jeremiah and Obadiah:<sup>1</sup> Baruch also particularly mentions them amongst "the authors (or expounders) of fables, and searchers out of understanding."<sup>2</sup> The learned are very much divided in their sentiments concerning the author of this book. Our Lightfoot conjectures that it is the production of Elihu; and this conjecture seems at first sight rather countenanced by the exordium to the first speech of Elihu, in which he seems to assume the character of the author, by continuing the narrative in his own person.<sup>3</sup> That passage, however, which appears to interrupt the speech of Elihu, and to be a part of the narrative, is, I apprehend, nothing more than an apostrophe to Job, or possibly to himself; for it manifestly consists of two distichs, while, on the contrary, it is well known that all the narrative parts, all in which the author himself appears, are certainly written in prose. Another opinion, which has been still more generally received, attributes the work to Moses. This conjecture, however, for I cannot dignify it with any higher appellation, will be found to rest altogether upon another, namely, that this poem was originally a consolatory address to the Israelites, and an allegorical representation of their situation: and I must confess, I can scarcely conceive any thing more futile than such an hypothesis, since it is impossible to trace, throughout the whole book, the slightest allusion to the manners, customs, ceremonies, or history of the Israelites. I will add, moreover, that the style of Job appears to

<sup>1</sup> JER. xlix. 7. OBA. 8.    <sup>2</sup> BARUCH iii. 22, 23.    <sup>3</sup> JOB xxxii. 15, 16.



me materially different from the poetical style of Moses; for it is much more compact, concise, or condensed, more accurate in the poetical conformation of the sentences: as may be observed also in the prophecies of Balaam, the Mesopotamian, a foreigner indeed with respect to the Israelites, but neither unacquainted with their language, nor with the worship of the true God. I confess myself therefore, on the whole, more inclined to favour the opinion of those who suppose Job himself, or some contemporary, to be the author of this poem: for that it is the most ancient of all the sacred books, is, I think, manifest, from the subject, the language, the general character, and even from the obscurity of the work. Concerning the time also in which Job lived, although not directly specified, I see no great reason for doubt. The length of his life evinces that he was before Moses, and probably contemporary with the patriarchs. Not however to dwell upon the innumerable hypotheses of the learned on this subject, I will only mention, that there is the utmost probability of his having lived prior to the promulgation of the law, from the nature of the sacrifice which he institutes conformably to the command of God, namely, seven oxen and seven rams: for it is plain, from the example of Balaam, that a respect for that number prevailed in those countries, and at that period, from the traditional accounts which were still preserved among them of the seven days of creation.<sup>4</sup> The truth of the narrative would never, I am persuaded, have been called in question, but from the immoderate affection of some allegorizing mystics for their own fictions, which run to such excess, as to prevent them from acceding to any thing but what is visionary and typical. When I speak of the poem as founded in fact, I would be understood no further than concerns the general subject of the narrative, for I apprehend all the dialogue, and most likely some other parts, have partaken largely of the embellishments of poetry; but I cannot allow that this has by any means extended so far as to convert the whole into an allegory. Indeed I have not been able to trace any vestige of an allegorical meaning throughout the entire poem. And should even the exordium be suspected to be of this nature, we must recollect, that the historical books are not destitute of similar narratives.<sup>5</sup> The exordium and conclusion I agree are distinct from the poem itself, and stand in the place of an

<sup>4</sup> JOB xlii. 8. Compare NUMB. xxiii. 1, etc.

<sup>5</sup> JOB i. 6, etc. ii. 1, etc. Compare 1 KINGS xxii. 19—22.

argument or illustration; that they are however coeval with the poetical part, and the work of the same author, is evident, since they are indispensably necessary to the unravelling of the plot, which is not developed in the body of the poem. There are, it is true, phrases extant in the exordium, in which some critics have pretended to discover the hand of a later writer; the arguments, however, of these critics I cannot esteem of any great force or importance.(B)

That these points should be accounted of a very ambiguous nature, and should cause much embarrassment and controversy in the learned world, is nothing extraordinary; but that the main object and design of the poem should ever have been called in question, may justly excite our astonishment. For though many passages be confessedly obscure, though there be several which I fear no human skill will ever be able to unravel; and though the obscurity consist chiefly in the connexion of the incidents and the sentiments, it by no means necessarily follows, that the whole is involved in impenetrable darkness. The case indeed is far otherwise, for one and the same light, though at intervals overcast, shines on through the whole, and, like a conducting star, uniformly leads to the same point. If then any person will follow this guidance without perplexing himself with obscurities which he will occasionally meet, I have very little doubt but that he will clearly discern the end, the subject, the connexion, and arrangement of the whole work. It will, perhaps, be worth while to put to trial the efficacy of this maxim: let us, therefore, for the present, pass over those obscurities which might impede our progress: and, making the best use of those lights which are afforded by the more obvious passages, proceed with an attentive eye through the whole of the work, and observe whether something satisfactory is not to be discovered relating to the subject of the narrative and the design and intent of the poem.

The principal object held forth to our contemplation in this production, is the example of a good man, eminent for his piety, and of approved integrity, suddenly precipitated from the very summit of prosperity into the lowest depths of misery and ruin: who, having been first bereaved of his wealth, his possessions, and his children, is afterwards afflicted with the most excruciating anguish of a loathsome disease which entirely covers his body. He sustains all however with the mildest submission, and the most complete resignation to the will of Providence: "In all this," says the historian, "Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." And after the second trial,



“In all this did not Job sin with his lips.”<sup>6</sup> The author of the history remarks upon this circumstance a second time, in order to excite the observation of the reader, and to render him more attentive to what follows, which properly constitutes the true subject of the poem : namely, the conduct of Job with respect to his reverence for the Almighty, and the changes which accumulating misery might produce in his temper and behaviour. Accordingly we find that another still more exquisite trial of his patience yet awaits him, and which indeed, as the writer seems to intimate, he scarcely appears to have sustained with equal firmness, namely, the unjust suspicions, the bitter reproaches, and the violent altercations of his friends, who had visited him on the pretence of affording consolation. Here commences the plot or action of the poem : for when, after a long silence of all parties, the grief of Job breaks forth into passionate exclamations, and a vehement execration on the day of his birth ; the minds of his friends are suddenly exasperated, their intentions are changed, and their consolation, if indeed they originally intended any, is converted into contumely and reproaches. The first of these three singular comforters reproves his impatience ; calls in question his integrity, by indirectly insinuating that God does not inflict such punishments upon the righteous ; and finally, admonishes him, that the chastisement of God is not to be despised. The next of them, not less intemperate in his reproofs, takes it for granted, that the children of Job had only received the reward due to their offences ; and with regard to himself, intimates, that if he be innocent, and will apply with proper humility to the divine mercy, he may be restored. The third upbraids him with arrogance, with vanity, and even with falsehood, because he has presumed to defend himself against the unjust accusations of his companions ; and exhorts him to a sounder mode of reasoning and a more holy life. They all, with a manifest, though indirect allusion to Job, discourse very copiously concerning the divine judgements which are always openly displayed against the wicked, and of the certain destruction of hypocritical pretenders to virtue and religion. In reply to this, Job enumerates his sufferings, and complains bitterly of the inhumanity of his friends, and of the severity which he has experienced from the hand of God ; he calls to witness both God and man, that he is unjustly oppressed ; he intimates, that he is weak in comparison

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<sup>6</sup> JOB i. 22. ii. 10.



with God, that the contention is consequently unequal, and that be his cause ever so righteous he cannot hope to prevail. He expostulates with God himself still more vehemently, and with greater freedom, affirming, that he does not discriminate characters, but equally afflicts the just and the unjust. The expostulations of Job serve only to irritate still more the resentment of his pretended friends; they reproach him in severer terms with pride, impiety, passion, and madness; they repeat the same arguments respecting the justice of God, the punishment of the wicked, and their certain destruction after a short period of apparent prosperity. This sentiment they confidently pronounced to be confirmed both by their experience and by that of their fathers; and they maliciously exaggerate the ungrateful topic by the most splendid imagery and the most forcible language. On the part of Job, the general scope of the argument is much the same as before, but the expression is considerably heightened; it consists of appeals to the Almighty, asseverations of his own innocence, earnest expostulations, complaints of the cruelty of his friends, melancholy reflections on the vanity of human life, and upon his own severe misfortunes, ending in grief and desperation: he affirms, however, that he places his ultimate hope and confidence in God; and the more vehemently his adversaries urge, that the wicked only are objects of the divine wrath, and obnoxious to punishment, so much the more resolutely does Job assert their perpetual impunity, prosperity, and happiness, even to the end of their existence. The first of his opponents, Eliphaz, incensed by this assertion, descends directly to open crimination and contumely; he accuses the most upright of men of the most atrocious crimes, of injustice, rapine, and oppression; inveighs against him as an impious pretender to virtue and religion, and with a kind of sarcastic benevolence exhorts him to penitence. Vehemently affected with this reproof, Job, in a still more animated and confident strain, appeals to the tribunal of all-seeing Justice; and wishes it were only permitted him to plead his cause in the presence of God himself. He complains still more intemperately of the unequal treatment of Providence; exults in his own integrity, and then more tenaciously maintains his former opinion concerning the impunity of the wicked. To this another of the triumvirate, Bildad, replies, by a masterly, though concise dissertation on the majesty and sanctity of the Divine Being, indirectly rebuking the presumption of Job, who has dared to question his decrees. In reply to Bildad, Job demonstrates

himself no less expert at wielding the weapons of satire and ridicule, than those of reason and argument; and reverting to a more serious tone, he displays the infinite power and wisdom of God more copiously, and more poetically than the former speaker. The third of the friends making no return, and the others remaining silent, Job at length opens the true sentiments of his heart concerning the fate of the wicked; he allows that their prosperity is unstable, and that they and their descendants shall at last experience on a sudden, that God is the avenger of iniquity. In all this, however, he contends that the divine counsels do not admit of human investigation; but that the chief wisdom of man consists in the fear of God. He beautifully descants upon his former prosperity; and exhibits a striking contrast between it and his present affliction and debasement. Lastly, in answer to the crimination of Eliphaz and the imputations of the others, he relates the principal transactions of his past life; he asserts his integrity as displayed in all the duties of life, and in the sight of God and man; and again appeals to the justice and omniscience of God in attestation of his veracity.

If these circumstances be fairly collected from the general tenour and series of the work, as far as we are able to trace them through the plainer and more conspicuous passages, it will be no very difficult task to explain and define the subject of this part of the poem, which contains the dispute between Job and his friends. The argument seems chiefly to relate to the piety and integrity of Job, and turns upon this point, whether he, who by the divine providence and visitation is so severely punished and afflicted, ought to be accounted pious and innocent. This leads into a more extensive field of controversy, into a dispute indeed, which less admits of any definition or limit, concerning the nature of the divine counsels, in the dispensations of happiness and misery in this life. The antagonists of Job in this dispute observing him exposed to such severe visitations, conceiving that this affliction has not fallen upon him unmeritedly, accuse him of hypocrisy, and falsely ascribe to him the guilt of some atrocious but concealed offence. Job, on the contrary, conscious of no crime, and wounded by their unjust suspicions, defends his own innocence before God with rather more confidence and ardour than is commendable; and so strenuously contends for his own integrity, that he seems virtually to charge God himself with some degree of injustice.

This state of the controversy is clearly explained by what fol-



lows: for when the three friends have ceased to dispute with Job, "because he seemeth just in his own eyes,"<sup>7</sup> that is, because he has uniformly contended, that there was no wickedness in himself which could call down the heavy vengeance of God; Elihu comes forward justly offended with both parties; with Job, because "he justified himself in preference to God,"<sup>8</sup> that is, because he defended so vehemently the justice of his own cause, that he seemed in some measure to arraign the justice of God; against the three friends, because, "though they were unable to answer Job, they ceased not to condemn him:"<sup>9</sup> that is, they concluded in their own minds, that Job was impious and wicked, while, nevertheless, they had nothing specific to object against his assertions of his own innocence, or upon which they might safely ground their accusation.

The conduct of Elihu evidently corresponds with this state of the controversy: he professes, after a slight prefatory mention of himself, to reason with Job, unbiassed equally by favour or resentment. He therefore reproves Job from his own mouth, because he had attributed too much to himself; because he had affirmed himself to be altogether free from guilt and depravity; because he had presumed to contend with God, and had not scrupled to insinuate, that the Deity was hostile to him. He asserts, that it is not necessary for God to explain and develope his counsels to men; that he nevertheless takes many occasions of admonishing them, not only by visions and revelations, but even by the visitations of his providence, by sending calamities and diseases upon them, to repress their arrogance and reform their obduracy. He next rebukes Job, because he had pronounced himself upright, and affirmed that God had acted inimically, if not unjustly towards him, which he proves to be no less improper than indecent. In the third place, he objects to Job, that from the miseries of the good, and prosperity of the wicked, he has falsely and perversely concluded, that there was no advantage to be derived from the practice of virtue. On the contrary he affirms, that when the afflictions of the just continue, it is because they do not place a proper confidence in God, ask relief at his hands, patiently expect it, nor demean themselves before him with becoming humility and submission. This observation alone, he adds very properly, is at once a sufficient reproof of the contumacy of Job, and a full refutation of the unjust suspicions of his friends.<sup>10</sup> Lastly, he

<sup>7</sup> Chap. xxxii. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Chap. xxxii. 2. Compare xxxv. 2, xl. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Chap. xxxv. 4.



explains the purposes of the Deity in chastening men, which are in general to prove and to amend them, to repress their arrogance, to afford him an opportunity of exemplifying his justice upon the obstinate and rebellious, and of shewing favour to the humble and obedient. He supposes God to have acted in this manner towards Job; on that account he exhorts him to humble himself before his righteous Judge, to beware of appearing obstinate or contumacious in his sight, and of relapsing into a repetition of his sin. He intreats him, from the contemplation of the divine power and majesty, to endeavour to retain a proper reverence for the Almighty. To these frequently intermitted and often repeated admonitions of Elihu, Job makes no return.

The oration of God himself follows that of Elihu, in which, disdaining to descend to any particular explication of his divine counsels, but instancing some of the stupendous effects of his infinite power, he insists upon the same topics which Elihu had before touched upon. In the first place, having reproved the temerity of Job, he convicts him of ignorance, in being unable to comprehend the works of his creation, which were obvious to every eye; the nature and structure of the earth, the sea, the light, and the animal kingdom. He then demonstrates his weakness, by challenging him to prove his own power by emulating any single exertion of the divine energy, and then referring him to one or two of the brute creation, with which he is unable to contend—how much less therefore with the omnipotent Creator and Lord of all things, who is or can be accountable to no being whatever?<sup>11</sup> On this Job humbly submits to the will of Providence, acknowledges his own ignorance and imbecility, and “repents in dust and ashes.”

On a due consideration of all these circumstances, the principal object of the poem seems to be this third and last trial of Job, from the injustice and unkindness of his accusing friends. The consequence of which is, in the first place, the anger, indignation, and contumacy of Job, and afterwards his composure, submission, and penitence. The design of the poem is, therefore, to teach men, that having a due respect to the corruption, infirmity, and ignorance of human nature, as well as to the infinite wisdom and majesty of God, they are to reject all confidence in their own strength, in their own righteousness, and to preserve on all occasions an unwavering and

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<sup>11</sup> See Chap. xli. 2, 3.

unsullied faith, and to submit with becoming reverence to his decrees.

I would wish it, however, to be carefully observed, that the subject of the dispute between Job and his friends differs from the subject of the poem in general: that the end of the poetical part is different from the design of the narrative at large. For although the design and subject of the poem be exactly as I have defined them, it may nevertheless be granted, that the whole history, taken together, contains an example of patience, together with its reward. This point not having been treated with sufficient distinctness by the learned, I cannot help esteeming it the principal cause of the perplexity in which the subject has been involved.(c)

I am not ignorant, that to those who enter upon this inquiry, some questions will occur, which appear to require a separate examination; since many of them, however, are chiefly connected with those passages which are acknowledged to be obscure, which have not yet been clearly explained, and which, whatever they may hereafter be found to import, are not likely to affect the truth of our conclusion, I have thought proper to omit them. Nor will I allow, that because many things yet remain ambiguous and perplexed, we are therefore to doubt of those which are more open and evident. In regard to certain more important doctrines, which some persons of distinguished learning have thought to be established by this extraordinary monument of ancient wisdom, as they either depend in a great degree on the obscure passages above-mentioned, or do not seem to contribute in the least to the main design of the poem, nor to be consistent with the object of it, which I just now pointed out, I thought it still more unnecessary to introduce them in this disquisition. What I have advanced, I conceived fully adequate to the purpose of this undertaking, and a sufficient introduction to a critical examination of the composition and beauties of the poem.



## LECTURE XXXIII.

### THE POEM OF JOB NOT A PERFECT DRAMA.

The poem of Job commonly accounted dramatic; and thought by many to be of the same kind with the Greek tragedy: this opinion examined.—A plot or fable essential to a regular drama; its definition and essential qualities according to Aristotle—Demonstrated, that the poem of Job does not contain any plot: its form and design more fully explained—Compared with the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles; with the *Oedipus Coloneus*; and shewn to differ entirely from both in form and manner—It is nevertheless a most beautiful and perfect performance in its kind: it approaches very near the form of a perfect drama; and, for regularity in form and arrangement, justly claims the first place among the poetical compositions of the Hebrews.

WHEN I undertook the present investigation, my principal object was to enable you to form some definite opinion concerning the poem of Job, and to assign it its proper place among the compositions of the Hebrew poets. This will possibly appear to some a superfluous and idle undertaking, as the point seems long since to have been finally determined, the majority of the critics having decidedly adjudged it to belong to the dramatic class. Since, however, the term dramatic, as I formerly had reason to remark, is in itself extremely ambiguous, the present disquisition will not be confined within the limits of a single question; for the first object of inquiry will necessarily be, what idea is affixed to the appellation by those critics who term the book of Job a dramatic poem: and after we have determined this point (if it be possible to determine it, for they do not seem willing to be explicit) we may then with safety proceed to inquire whether, pursuant to that idea, the piece may be justly entitled to this appellation.

A poem is called dramatic, either in consequence of its form, the form I mean of a perfect dialogue, which is sustained entirely by the characters or personages without the intervention of the poet; and this was the definition adopted by the ancient critics: or else, according to the more modern acceptance of the word, in consequence of a plot or fable being represented in it. If those who account the book of Job dramatic, adhere to the former definition, I have little inclination to litigate the point; and indeed the object of



the controversy would scarcely be worth the labour. Though a critic, if disposed to be scrupulously exact, might insist that the work, upon the whole, is by no means a perfect dialogue, but consists of a mixture of the narrative and colloquial style: for the historical part, which is all composed in the person of the writer himself, is certainly to be accounted a part of the work itself, considered as a whole. Since, however, on the other hand, the historical or narrative part is all evidently written in prose, and seems to me to be substituted merely in the place of an argument or comment, for the purpose of explaining the rest, and certainly does not constitute any part of the poem, since, moreover, those short sentences, which serve to introduce the different speeches, contain very little more than the names; I am willing to allow, that the structure or form of this poem is on the whole dramatic. But this concession will, I fear, scarcely satisfy the critics in question; for they speak of the regular order and conduct of the piece, and of the dramatic catastrophe; they assert, that the interposition of the Deity is a necessary part of the machinery of the fable; they even enumerate the acts and scenes, and use the very same language in all respects, as if they spoke of a Greek tragedy; insomuch, that when they term the poem of Job dramatic, they seem to speak of that species of drama which was cultivated and improved in the theatre of Athens.<sup>1</sup> It appears, therefore, a fair object of inquiry, whether the poem of Job be possessed of the peculiar properties of the Greek drama, and may with reason and justice be classed with the theatrical productions of that people.

We have already agreed, that the greater and more perfect drama is peculiarly distinguished from the less and more common species, inasmuch as it retains not only the dramatic form, or the perfect dialogue, but also exhibits some entire action, fable, or plot. And this is perfectly agreeable to the definition of Aristotle; for although he points out many parts or constituents in the composition of a tragedy, he assigns the first place to the plot or fable.<sup>2</sup> This he says is the beginning, this the end, this is the most important part, the very soul of a tragedy, without which it is utterly undeserving of the name, and indeed cannot properly be said to exist. A plot or fable is the representation of an action or event, or of a series

<sup>1</sup> See CALMET, Preface sur Job. HARE, Not. ad Ps. cvii. 40. CARPZOVII Introduct. in Libros Biblicos, part ii. p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> ARIST. Poet. cap. vi.

of events or incidents tending all to one point, which are detailed with a view to a particular object or conclusion. A tragedy, says the same author, is not a representation of men, but of actions, a picture of life, of prosperity, and adversity: in other words, the business of the poem is not merely to exhibit manners only, nor does the most perfect representation of manners constitute a tragedy; for in reality a tragedy may exist with little or no display of manners or character; its business is to exhibit life and action, or some regular train of actions and events, on which depends the felicity or infelicity of the persons concerned. For human happiness or prosperity consists in action; and action is not a quality, but is the end of man. According to our manners we are denominated good or bad, but we are happy or unhappy, prosperous or unsuccessful, according to actions or events. Poets therefore do not form a plot or action merely for the sake of imitating manners or character; but manners and character are added to the plot, and for the sake of it are chiefly attended to. Thus far he has accurately drawn the line between the representation of action and manners. He adds, moreover, that unity is essential to a regular plot or action, and that it must be complete in itself, and of a proper length.<sup>3</sup> But to comprehend more perfectly the nature of a plot or fable, it must be observed, that there are two principal species: for they are either complex or simple;<sup>4</sup> the former contains some unexpected vicissitude of fortune, such as the recognition of a person at first unknown, the recovery of a lost child, or a sudden change in the situation of the parties, or perhaps both; the latter contains nothing of the kind, but proceeds in one uniform and equal tenour. In every plot or fable, however, be it ever so simple, and though it contain nothing of the wonderful or unexpected, there is always a perplexity or embarrassment, as also a regular solution or catastrophe;<sup>5</sup> the latter must proceed from the former, and indeed must depend upon it; which cannot be the case, unless there be a certain order or connexion in the incidents and events which inclines them towards the same end, and combines them all in one termination.

On fairly considering these circumstances, I have no hesitation in affirming, that the poem of Job contains no plot or action whatever, not even of the most simple kind; it uniformly exhibits one constant state of things, not the smallest change of fortune taking

<sup>3</sup> ARIST. Poet. ch. vii.<sup>4</sup> ARIST. Poet. ch. x.<sup>5</sup> ARIST. ch. xviii.



place from the beginning to the end; and it contains merely a representation of those manners, passions and sentiments, which might actually be expected in such a situation. Job is represented as reduced from the summit of human prosperity, to a condition the most miserable and afflicted: and the sentiments of both Job and his friends are exactly such as the occasion dictates. For here a new temptation falls upon him, by which the constancy of Job is put to the severest trial; and this circumstance it is that constitutes the principal subject of the poem. Job had, we find, endured the most grievous calamities, the loss of his wealth, the deprivation of his children, and the miserable union of poverty and disease, with so much fortitude, and with so just a confidence in his own integrity, that nothing could be extorted from him in the least inconsistent with the strictest reverence for the Divine Being; he is now put to the proof, whether, after enduring all this with firmness and resignation, he can with equal patience endure to have his innocence and virtue (in which perhaps he had placed too much confidence) indirectly questioned, and even in plain terms arraigned. Job, now sinking under the weight of his misery, laments his condition with more vehemence than before. His friends reprove his impatience, and drop some dark insinuations to the apparent disparagement of his virtue and integrity, by entering into very copious declamations concerning the justice of God in proportioning his visitations to the crimes of men. Job is still more violently agitated; and his friends accuse him with less reserve. He appeals to God, and expostulates with some degree of freedom. They urge and press him in the very heat of his passion; and, by still more malignant accusations, excite his indignation and his confidence, which were already too vehement. Elihu interposes as an arbiter of the controversy; he re-proves the severe spirit of the friends, as well as the presumption of Job, who trusted too much in his own righteousness. Job receives his admonitions with mildness and temper, and being rendered more sedate by his expostulation, makes no reply, though the other appears frequently to expect it. When the Almighty, however, condescends to set before him his rashness, frailty, and ignorance, he submits in perfect humility, and with sincere repentance. Here the temptation of Job concludes, in the course of which there was great reason to apprehend he would be totally vanquished: at the same time the poem necessarily terminates, the state of things still remaining without any change or vicissitude whatever. The poem indeed



contains a great variety of sentiment, excellent representations of manners and character, remarkable efforts of passion, much important controversy ; but no change of fortune, no novelty of incident, no plot, no action.

If indeed we rightly consider, we shall, I dare believe, find that the very nature of the subject excludes even the possibility of a plot or action. From that state of settled and unvarying misery in which Job is involved, arises the doubt of his integrity, and those insinuations and criminations which serve to exasperate him, and by which he is stimulated to expostulate with God, and to glory in his own righteousness. It was proper, therefore, that, by a continuance of the same state and condition, he should be recalled to an humble spirit, and to a proper reverence for the Almighty Providence. For it would have been altogether contrary to what is called poetical justice, if he had been restored to prosperity previous to his submission and penitence. The repentance of Job, however, we find concludes the poem. Nor was it at all necessary, that the question concerning the divine justice should be resolved in the body of the work, either by the fortunate issue of the affairs of Job, or even by the explication of the divine intentions : this, in fact, was not the primary object, nor does it at all constitute the subject of the poem ; but is subservient, or in a manner an appendage to it. The disputation which takes place upon this topic, is no more than an instrument of temptation, and is introduced in order to explain the inmost sentiments of Job, and to lay open the latent pride that existed in his soul. The Almighty, therefore, when he addresses Job, pays little regard to this point ; nor indeed was it necessary, for neither the nature nor the object of the poem required a defence of the Divine Providence, but merely a reprehension of the over-confidence of Job.

If indeed we suppose any change to have taken place in the state of affairs, the nature and subject of the poem will also be changed. If we connect with the poetical part either the former or the latter part of the history, or both, the subject will then be the display of a perfect example of patience in enduring the severest outward calamities, and at length receiving an ample reward at the hands of the Almighty : from this, however, the universal tenour of the poem will be found greatly to differ. It will be found to exhibit rather the impatience of Job in bearing the reproaches and abuse of his pretended friends : and this appears to lead to the true object of the poem ;

for Job is irritated, he indulges his passion, he speaks too confidently of his own righteousness, and in too irreverend a style concerning the justice of God; in the end he is converted by the admonitions of Elihu, and the reproofs of his omnipotent Creator. The true object of the poem appears therefore to be, to demonstrate the necessity of humility, of trust in God, and of the profoundest reverence for the divine decrees, even in the holiest and most exalted characters.

Should it be objected, that I have contended with a scrupulous perverseness concerning the meaning of a word; and should it after all be affirmed, that this very temptation of Job, this dispute itself possesses in some degree the form or appearance of an action; I am content to submit the trial to another issue, and to be judged by fair investigation of the practice of the Greek poets upon similar occasions. There is no necessity to remind this assembly, with how much art and design the fable or plot of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles appears to have been constructed; with what powers of imagination and judgement the process of the drama is conducted; and in what manner, by a regular succession of events, arising naturally from each other, the horrid secret is developed, which as soon as disclosed precipitates the hero of the tragedy from the summit of human happiness into the lowest depths of misery and ruin. Let us only suppose Sophocles to have treated the same subject in a different manner, and to have formed a poem on that part of the story alone which is comprised in the last act. Here *Oedipus* would be indeed exhibited as an object of the most tender compassion; here would be a spacious field for the display of the most interesting and tragical affections: the fatal catastrophe would be deplored; the blindness, disgrace, exile of the hero, would enhance the distress of the scene; and to the bitterness of present calamity would be added the still more bitter remembrance of the past. The poet might copiously display the sorrow and commiseration of his daughters, his detestation of himself, and of all that belong to him, and more copiously, of those who had preserved him when exposed, who had supported and educated him: all these topics the poet has slightly touched upon in these lines:

*Ἰὼ Κισσαίων, τί μ' ἰδέχου; τί μ' οὐ λαβών*

*Ἐκτείνας εἰς οὐρανόν;*—

The succeeding passages are also extremely pathetic. These would easily admit of amplification, and, when the ardour of grief was a



little abated, he might have added his vindication of himself, his asseverations of his innocence, his plea of ignorance, and fatal necessity, and his impassioned exclamations against fortune and the gods. From all this might be constructed a poem, great, splendid, copious, diversified; and the subject would also furnish a topic of disputation not unlike that of Job. It might also assume, in some measure, the dramatic form; the same characters that appear in the tragedy might be introduced; it might possess the exact proportions and all the requisites of a drama, fable alone excepted, which indeed constitutes the very essence of a dramatic poem, and without which all other qualities are of no avail: for the Greeks would have called such a production a monody, or elegiac dialogue, or any thing but a tragedy.

This opinion receives still further confirmation from the example and authority of Sophocles himself in another instance. For when he again introduces the same Oedipus upon the stage in another tragedy, though the ground-work of the piece be nearly that which we have been describing, the conduct of it is totally different. This piece is called *Oedipus Coloneus*; the plot or fable is quite simple, on which account it is a fairer object of comparison with the poem of Job than any, the plot of which is more complex. Oedipus is introduced blind, exiled, and oppressed with misery; none of those circumstances above-mentioned have escaped the poet; such as the lamentation of his misery, the passionate exclamations against fate and the gods, and the vindication of his innocence. These, however, do not form the basis of the poem; they are introduced merely as circumstances, which afford matter of amplification, and which seem to flow from that elegant plot or action he has invented. Oedipus, led by his daughter, arrives at Colonus, there to die and be interred according to the admonition of the Oracle; for upon these circumstances the victory of the Athenians over the Thebans was made to depend. The place being accounted sacred, the Athenians are unwilling to receive him; but Theseus affords him refuge and protection. Another of his daughters is introduced, who informs him of the discord between her brothers, also that Creon is coming, with an intention of bringing him back to his own country in pursuance of a decree of the Thebans. After this Creon arrives; he endeavours to persuade Oedipus to return to Thebes; and on his refusal, attempts to make use of violence. Theseus protects Oedipus: and in the mean time Polynices arrives, with a view of bringing over his father to his party in the war against the



Thebans : this being the only condition on which he was to hope for victory. Oedipus refuses, and execrates his son in the severest terms : in conclusion, the answer of the Oracle being communicated to Theseus, Oedipus dies, and is secretly buried there. In this manner is constructed a regular, perfect, and important action or plot ; all the parts of which are connected together in one design, and tend exactly to the same conclusion, and in which are involved the fates of both Thebes and Athens. The manners, passions, characters, and sentiments, serve to adorn, but not to support the fable. Without any striking representation of these, the plot or action would still remain, and would of itself sustain the tragedy ; but if the action be removed, though all the rest remain, it is evident that the tragedy is totally annihilated.

From these observations it will, I think, be evident, that the poem of Job cannot properly be brought into comparison with either Oedipus of Sophocles, or with any other of the Greek tragedies. It will be evident, I think, that this poem ought not to be accounted of the same kind ; nor can possibly be classed with them, unless the whole nature and form of either the Greek or the Hebrew poem be changed ; or unless the plot or action be taken from the one, or added to the other : for without this great essential no poem can indeed be accounted a perfect drama.

But though I have urged thus much against its claim to that title, let it not be understood that I wish to derogate from its merits. That censure will rather apply to those who, by criticising it according to foreign and improper rules, would make that composition appear lame and imperfect, which on the contrary is in its kind most beautiful and perfect. If indeed the extreme antiquity of this poem, the obscurity and the difficulty that necessarily ensue from that circumstance be considered ; and if allowance be made for the total want of plot and action, we shall have cause to wonder at the elegance and interest which we find in its form, conduct, and economy. The arrangement is perfectly regular, and every part is admirably adapted to its end and design. The antiquary or the critic, who has been at the pains to trace the history of the Grecian drama from its first weak and imperfect efforts, and has carefully observed its tardy progress to perfection, will scarcely, I think, without astonishment, contemplate a poem produced so many ages before, so elegant in its design, so regular in its structure, so animated, so affecting, so near to the true dramatic model : while, on the contra-

ry, the united wisdom of Greece, after ages of study, was not able to produce any thing approaching to perfection in this walk of poetry before the time of *Æschylus*. But however this may be—whatever rank may be assigned to Job, in a comparison with the poets of Greece, to whom we must at least allow the merit of art and method; amongst the Hebrews, it must certainly be allowed, in this respect, to be unrivalled. It is of little consequence whether it be esteemed a didactic or an ethic, a pathetic or dramatic poem; only let it be assigned a distinct and conspicuous station in the highest rank of the Hebrew poetry. (A)

## LECTURE XXXIV.

### OF THE MANNERS, SENTIMENTS, AND STYLE OF THE POEM OF JOB.

Though the poem of Job do not contain a plot or fable, it possesses, nevertheless, some things in common with the perfect drama—Manners or character—The manners of Job, to be distinguished from the passions or emotions—The opinion of Aristotle, that the character of extreme virtue is not proper for tragedy, demonstrated to be neither applicable to Job, nor true with respect to tragedy in general—The design of the poem—The manners of the three friends: the gradations of passion more strongly marked in them than the diversity of manners—Elihu—The expostulation of God himself—Sentiments; expressive of things and of manners; the latter already noticed; the former consist partly of passion, partly of description: two examples of the softer passions: examples of description—The style of this poem uncommonly elegant and sublime; and the poetic conformation of the sentences extremely correct—Peroration, recommending the study of Hebrew literature.

WHEN I contended that the poem of Job ought not to be accounted a true and regular drama, such as are the tragedies of the Greeks, I was far from insinuating, that it did not possess the dramatic form. I not only allowed, that in its general conduct and economy it exhibited a similitude, an anticipation as it were of genuine tragedy; but that it contained also all the principal requisites of a dramatic poem, fable alone excepted: of these the first and most important is, the imitation of manners or character.

The manners are what serve to mark or discriminate the different persons, who take a part in the action of the poem, to declare and express each character's peculiar mode of speaking, thinking, and acting; and compose as it were the intellectual image of the man. The principal personage in this poem is Job, and in his character is meant to be exhibited (as far as is consistent with human infirmity) an example of perfect virtue. This is intimated in the argument or introduction, but is still more eminently displayed by his own actions and sentiments. He is holy, devout, and most piously and reverently impressed with the sacred awe of his divine Creator; he is also upright, and conscious of his own integrity; he is patient of evil, and yet very remote from that insensibility or rather stupidity to which the Stoic school pretended. Oppressed therefore with



unparalleled misfortunes, he laments his misery, and even wishes a release by death; in other words, he obeys, and gives place to the dictates of nature: irritated, however, by the unjust insinuations, and the severe reproaches of his pretended friends, he is more vehemently exasperated, and the too great confidence in his own righteousness leads him to expostulate with God in terms scarcely consistent with piety and strict decorum.

It must be observed, that the first speech of Job, though it burst forth with all the vehemence of passion, consists wholly of complaint, "the words of a desperate man, which are but wind;"<sup>1</sup> which is indeed the apology that he immediately makes for his conduct; intimating, that he is far from presuming to plead with God, far from daring to call in question the divine decrees, or even to mention his own innocence in the presence of his all-just Creator: nor do I see any good reason for the censure which has been passed by some commentators upon this passage. The poet seems, with great judgement and ingenuity, to have performed in this what the nature of his work required. He has depicted the affliction and anguish of Job, as flowing from his wounded heart in a manner so agreeable to human nature (and certainly so far venial) that it may be truly said, "in all this Job sinned not with his lips." It is, nevertheless, embellished by such affecting imagery, and inspired with such a warmth and force of sentiment, that we find it afforded ample scope for calumny; nor did the unkind witnesses of his sufferings permit so fair an opportunity to escape. The occasion is eagerly embraced by Eliphaz, to rebuke the impatience of Job; and, not satisfied with this, he proceeds to accuse him in direct terms of wanting fortitude, and obliquely to insinuate something of a deeper dye. Though deeply hurt with the coarse reproaches of Eliphaz, still, however, when Job afterwards complains of the severity of God, he cautiously refrains from violent expostulations with his Creator, and, contented with the simple expression of affliction, he humbly confesses himself a sinner.<sup>2</sup> Hence, I think, it is evident, that those vehement and perverse attestations of his innocence, those murmurs against the divine Providence, which his tottering virtue afterwards permits, are to be considered merely as the consequences of momentary passion, and not as the ordinary effects of his settled character or manners. They prove him at the very worst not an irreligious man, but a man possessed of integrity, and too confident of it; a man oppressed with

<sup>1</sup> Job vi. 26.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. vii. 20.

almost every imaginable evil, both corporal and mental, and hurried beyond the limits of virtue by the strong influence of pain and affliction. When, on the contrary, his importunate visitors abandon by silence the cause which they had so warily and so successfully maintained; and cease unjustly to load him with unmerited criminations; though he defends his argument with scarcely less obstinacy; yet the vehemence of his grief appears gradually to subside, he returns to himself, and explains his sentiments with more candour and sedateness: and however we may blame him for assuming too much of arrogance in his appeals to the Almighty, certainly his defence against the accusations of Eliphaz is no more than the occasion will strictly justify. Observe, in the first place, how admirably the confidence and perseverance of Job is displayed in replying to the slander of his false friends:

- " Ut vivit Deus, qui nos meum amovit :  
 " Et omnipotens, qui amare me induit animum meum ;  
 " (Nam omnino adhuc mens mihi constat,  
 " Et spiritus Dei est in naribus meis :)  
 " Ita nunquam labia mea rem aliquam loquentur,  
 " Nec lingua mea quod falsum est profertur :  
 " Absit, ut a vobis nos stare pronunciem :  
 " Donec expiravero, non amovebo a me integritatem meam.  
 " Institutam meam firmiter retineo, nec eam dimittam ;  
 " In omni vita cor meum nunquam me probro adficiet ;  
 " Fiat, sicut improbus, inimicus meus ;  
 " Et qui sese incitat contra me, sicut iniustus."<sup>3</sup>

But how magnificent, how noble, how inviting and beautiful is that image of virtue, in which he delineates his past life ! What dignity and authority does he seem to possess !

- " Cum egrederer ad portam, super urbe ;  
 " Cum in foro tribunal meum constituerem :  
 " Viderunt me juvenes, et sese occultarunt ;  
 " Et senes assurrexerunt, steterunt :  
 " Principes cohibuerunt sermonem,  
 " Et ori suo manum imposuerunt :  
 " Vox nobilium obmutuit ;  
 " Et lingua eorum palato adhaesit :"<sup>4</sup>

What liberality ! what a promptitude in beneficence !

- " Profecto auris audiebat, et beatum me praeedicabat ;  
 " Et oculos videbat, et testimonium mihi perhibebat :  
 " Quoniam statim vindicabam inopem vociferantem ;

<sup>3</sup> Chap. xxvii. 2—7.

<sup>4</sup> Chap. xxix. 7—10.



- " Et pupillum, et cui nullus opitulator :  
 " Benedictio pereuntis super me semper descendebat ;  
 " Et cor viduae ut caneret efficiebam." <sup>5</sup>

What sanctity, what integrity in a judicial capacity !

- " Iustitiam indui, et ipsa me vestivit ;  
 " Instar pallii et tiaræ iudicium meum :—  
 " Pater eram egenis ;  
 " Et in causam etiam ignoti solebam inquirere :  
 " Confringebam molares oppressoris ;  
 " Et a dentibus eius excutiebam prædam." <sup>6</sup>

But what can be more engaging than the purity of his devotion, and his reverence for the Supreme Being, founded upon the best and most philosophical principles ? Besides that through the whole there runs a strain of the most amiable tenderness and humanity :

- " Quæ enim portio a Deo destinata desuper ;  
 " Et hæreditas ab omnipotente de excelsis ?  
 " Annon excidium iniusto ?  
 " Et abalienatio operantibus iniquitatem ?  
 " Nonne Ille semper videt vias meas ?  
 " Et omnes gressus meos dinumerat ?  
 " Si sprevi causam servi mei,  
 " Et ancillæ meæ, cum mecum lite contenderent ;  
 " Quid tum facerem, cum surgeret Deus ;  
 " Et cum visitaret, quid illi responderem ?  
 " Nonne in ventre, qui me fecit, idem illum fecit ?  
 " Nonne formavit nos in utero unus ?" <sup>7</sup>

Aristotle has remarked, that the example of a singularly good man falling from prosperous circumstances into misfortune, is by no means a proper subject for a tragedy ; since it is offensive and indecent rather than piteous or terrible.<sup>8</sup> This remark, though consistent enough with the Greek drama, and with the sentiments and manners of the heathens, is scarcely applicable to our tragedy, and still less to the poem of Job. "Pity," says the same author on another occasion, "is excited when adversity falls upon those who are undeserving of it." Great virtue therefore plunged into great misfortunes, so far from being an unsuitable subject, ought to be the most direct and proper means of moving compassion. "Terror is excited by a representation of the misery of such persons as bear the nearest resemblance to ourselves ;" the misfortunes therefore of those who are vicious in an extreme, are not much calculated to excite

<sup>5</sup> Chap. xxix. 11—13.

<sup>6</sup> Chap. xxix. 14, 16, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Chap. xxxi. 2—4. 13—15.

<sup>8</sup> Poet. cap. xiii.



terror ; but this is by no means the case with regard to the misery of such as are eminently good ; for if we fear for ourselves when we see moderate virtue in affliction, much more, surely, when a superior degree of it is in that state. It appears to me, therefore, that Aristotle was not of opinion, that the example of a very good man in extreme affliction is ill calculated to excite either pity or terror ; but rather is a spectacle likely to prove injurious to the cause of virtue, and therefore disgusting and detestable, and consequently unfit to be produced upon the stage. This opinion of the philosopher seems to result from an unjust and visionary estimation of human virtue, to repress which appears to have been the very design and object of the book of Job. The character of Job indeed, though approaching so near to the perfection of virtue, seems, notwithstanding, to have a considerable alloy of human infirmity, so as neither to want probability, nor to lose its effect in exciting terror. For if it be extreme wickedness in the most upright of men, when oppressed with the severest misery, to murmur at all against the divine justice, who then shall stand before God ? Who shall expect to pass through the pilgrimage of life without his portion of evil and of sin ? The end of the poem is moreover by no means ill calculated to excite terror ; since this moral is particularly inculcated in it, "Be not high-minded, but fear :—" and Job himself sets before us, what impression the example of his misfortunes ought to make upon our minds in this respect :

" Super hoc ipsum attoniti stupebunt integri ;  
 " Et innocens adversus hypocritam zelo flagrabit :  
 " Sed obstinate persistet in via sua iustus ;  
 " Et puro manuum angebitur constantia."<sup>9</sup>

The three friends are exactly such characters as the nature of the poem required. They are severe, irritable, rough censors, readily and with apparent satisfaction deviating from the purpose of consolation into reproof and contumely. Even from the very first they manifest this evil propensity, and indicate what is to be expected from them. The first of them, indeed, in the opening of his harangue, assumes an air of candour :

" Si tentemus te adloqui, an aegre laturus es ?"<sup>10</sup>

Indignation is, however, instantly predominant :

" At cohibere sermones quis valeat ?"

The second flames forth at once :

<sup>9</sup> Chap. xviii. 8, 9.

<sup>10</sup> Chap. iv. 2.

" Quousque proloqueris ista,  
 " Et verba oris tui erunt instar venti vehementi ?" <sup>11</sup>

But remark the third :

" Annon multitudini verborum respondebitur ?  
 " Numquid vir loquax habebitur iustus ?  
 " An mendacia tua hominibus silentium imponent ?  
 " Et tum irriseris, nemo tibi pudorem incutiet ?" <sup>12</sup>

They are represented as illiberal, contentious ; inclined to torture every thing to the worst of purposes :

" An Deus pervertet ius ?  
 " Anne omnipotens distorquebit iustitiam ?" <sup>13</sup>

Where observe, Job has not as yet uttered an intemperate expression in disparagement of the divine justice.

" Quin tu irritam facis religionem,  
 " Et minuis precationem coram Deo." <sup>14</sup>

Such is the invective of the other of them. They are also proud, contemptuous, and arrogate too much to their own wisdom :

" Quamobrem reputamur instar bruti pecoris ;  
 " Impuri habemur in oculis vestris ?  
 " O Ianians seipsum in ira sua !  
 " Ergone propter te derelinquetur tellus ?  
 " Et revelletur rupes e loco suo ?  
 " Imo vero improborum lumen extinguetur." <sup>15(A)</sup>

Nor is Zophar, who takes up the subject after Bildad, more modest :

" Profecto cogitationes meae ad respondendum me stimulant,  
 " Et propterea festinus me impellit impetus :  
 " Castigationem mihi ignominiosam audiero ?  
 " Ergo spiritus intelligentiae meae me cogit respondere." <sup>16</sup>

The conduct of all these severe censors is much the same through the whole piece. Eliphaz indeed, who begins in the mildest terms, descends afterwards to the severest reproaches ; and he indirectly charges Job with the most atrocious offences : from which intemperance of language, it must be confessed, the others refrain. Bildad, not to be silent, repeats in a brief and florid manner the subject, which had already been twice treated of by the others, namely, the majesty and holiness of God ; and Zophar, withdrawing from the contest, deserts entirely the cause of his companion, and leaves the field to Job. The business of defamation indeed seems with great propriety, committed to three persons. It would have been

<sup>11</sup> Chap. viii. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Chap. viii. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Chap. xviii. 3—5.

<sup>12</sup> Chap. xi. 2, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Chap. xv. 4.

<sup>16</sup> Chap. xx. 2, 3.



too confined and trivial in the hands of one; and, amongst a crowd of accusers, too confused and clamorous. There appears, however, but little difference in the manners of the three friends; for in them the poet has rather studied to display the progress of the passions, than any diversity of character. But though the nice and fastidious criticism of the moderns demand variety in this respect, the simplicity of infant poetry will be excused by every person of real judgment; and I think this deficiency (if such it may be called) is amply compensated by the gravity and importance of the subject and sentiments.

The lenity and moderation of Elihu serves as a beautiful contrast to the intemperance and asperity of the other three. He is pious, mild and equitable; equally free from adulation and severity; and endued with singular wisdom, which he attributes entirely to the inspiration of God: and his modesty, moderation, and wisdom, are the more entitled to commendation when we consider his unripe youth. As the characters of his detractors were in all respects calculated to inflame the mind of Job; that of this arbitrator is admirably adapted to sooth and compose it: to this point the whole drift of the argument tends, and on this the very purport of it seems to depend.(B)

The interposition of the Deity, and its connexion with the general design of the poem, I have formerly noticed. I will only add, that although some critics have really thought the whole address inconsistent, and foreign to the subject, no man has ever accounted it in any respect unworthy of that supreme Majesty to which it is ascribed.

Another circumstance deserving particular attention in a poem of this kind, is the sentiment; which must be agreeable to the subject, and embellished with proper expression. It is by Aristotle enumerated among the essentials of a dramatic poem; not indeed as peculiar to that species of poetry alone, but as common, and of the greatest importance to all. Manners or character are essential only to that poetry in which living persons are introduced; and all such poems must afford an exact representation of human manners: but sentiment is essential to every poem, indeed to every composition whatever. It respects both persons and things; as far as it regards persons, it is particularly concerned in the delineation of the manners and passions; and those instances to which I have just been adverting, are sentiments expressive of manners. Those which re-



late to the delineation of the passions, and to the description of other objects, yet remain unnoticed in this Lecture. As I formerly, however, treated of these subjects in general, I could scarcely avoid producing some examples from this poem; for in demonstrating the power of the poetic diction in exciting the passions, I could not possibly deduce my instances from a better source.<sup>17</sup> On the present occasion, therefore, I shall study brevity, and avoid as much as possible the tediousness of repetition.

The poem of Job abounds chiefly in the more vehement passions, grief and anger, indignation and violent contention. It is adapted in every respect to the incitement of terror; and, as the specimens already quoted will sufficiently prove, is universally animated with the true spirit of sublimity. It is however not wanting in the gentler affections; the following complaints, for instance, are replete with an affecting spirit of melancholy:

- "Homo natus de muliere,
- "Brevi est dierum, et satur tumultus:
- "Ut flos emicat, et languescit;
- "Fugitque ut umbra, et non subsistit,
- "Etiamne super hunc oculos tuos aperuisti?
- "Et me adduces in iudicium tecum?—
- "Remove conspectum ab eo, ut remissionis aliquid habeat;
- "Et acquiescat diei suo sicut mercenarius."<sup>18</sup>

The whole passage abounds with the most beautiful imagery, and is a most perfect specimen of the elegiac. His grief afterwards becomes more fervent, but is at the same time soft and querimonious.

- "Quousque vexabitis animam meam,
- "Et conterentis me sermonibus?
- "Iam decem vicibus me contumelia affecistis;
- "Non erubescitis, in me usque obfirmati estis.—
- "Miseremini mei, miseremini mei, O vos amici mei!
- "Nam Dei manus me plaga affecit.
- "Quianam insectamini me, ut Deus;
- "Neque carna mea satiati estis?"<sup>19</sup>

That self-indulgence which is so natural to the passion of hope; its ingenuity in drawing pictures of future felicity; its credulity in cherishing these ideas, and the gaiety and elevation of mind with which it describes them, are finely expressed by Job in the passage immediately following the relation of his past life:

<sup>17</sup> See Lect. xiv. xvi. xvii.

<sup>18</sup> Chap. xiv. 1, 2, 3, 6.

<sup>19</sup> Chap. xix. 2, 3, 21, 22.

" Proinde dicebam, in nido meo expirabo :  
 " Et ut arenam multiplicabo dies :  
 " Radix mea sese dilatabit ad aquas ;  
 " Et ros commorabitur in ramo meo :  
 " Gloria mea semper erit mecum recens ;  
 " Et arcus meus in manu mea renovabitur :  
 " Me audient, et expectabunt ;  
 " Et ad consilium meum intenti tacebunt :  
 " Postquam locutus fuero, nihil iterabunt ;  
 " Et super eos stillabit oratio mea :  
 " Et expectabunt me, ut pluviam ;  
 " Et os suum diducunt ad imbrem serotinum." <sup>20</sup>

To this part of the subject, which relates to the delineation of the passions, may be referred those delicate touches which animate almost every description, and which are drawn from the most intimate knowledge of the genuine emotions of the human soul. I shall content myself with one example out of the many which the compass of the work affords. It is exactly copied from nature; for when events take place according to our ardent wishes, but quite contrary to our expectations, we have the utmost difficulty to believe them real. Job thus expresses himself respecting God :

" Si invocavero, et mihi responderit,  
 " Non crederem, quod exaudiverit vocem meam." <sup>21</sup>

This is admirably expressive both of the majesty of God, and of the severity which he exercised towards Job ; it is also no less descriptive of the humiliation and despair of the sufferer.

" Adridebo eis, non credent : " <sup>22</sup>

says Job of his dependants ; in which is expressed his own dignity and gravity united with urbanity, and at the same time their unviolated attachment to him. Thus too, by the same circumstance, is depicted both the ardour and alacrity of the war-horse, and his eagerness for the battle :

" Cum trepidatione et fremitu vorat terram ;  
 " Nec credit, quod tubae sit sonitus :  
 " Pergente iam tuba, dicit, euge ;  
 " Et a longinquo odoratur praelium,  
 " Tonitru principum et clangorem." <sup>23</sup>

This passage, which has indeed always attracted general admiration, will also serve to exemplify the excellence of the descriptive parts of this poem : and from the same circumstance we may fairly

<sup>20</sup> Ch. xix. 11—23.    <sup>21</sup> Ch. ix. 16.    <sup>22</sup> Ch. xxix. 24.    <sup>23</sup> Ch. xxxix. 24, 25.



conjecture, that the pictures, which are exhibited in other parts of the work, would appear no less striking resemblances of the realities, were we equally well acquainted with the originals. To judge rightly of a description, we ought to have as clear and distinct ideas of the thing itself as the author. The idea of thunder is familiar to all mankind; observe, therefore, how it is depicted by Elihu:

"Ob hoc etiam expavescit cor meum,

"Et subsultim trepidat e sede sua:

"Attente audite vocis eius fremitum,

"Et murmur quod ex ore eius egreditur!

"Sub omne coelum rectus eius impetus,

"Et lumen eius in extremas oras terrae.

"Post illud rugit vox:

"Intonat voce maiestatis suae;

"Neque investigari poterit, cum audita fuerit, vox eius."<sup>24</sup>(c)

It would be superfluous to insist any longer on a minute detail, since the most splendid examples of every beauty and elegance of sentiment, of imagery, and of diction, meet the eye of the attentive reader in every part of the poem. Let it suffice to say, that the dignity of the style is answerable to that of the subject; its force and energy to the greatness of those passions which it describes: and as this production excels all the other remains of the Hebrew poetry in economy and arrangement, so it yields to none in sublimity of style, and in every grace and excellence of composition. Among the principal of these may be accounted the accurate and perfectly poetical conformation of the sentences, which is indeed generally most observable in the most ancient of the poetical compositions of the Hebrews. Here, however, as is natural and proper in a poem of so great length and sublimity, the writer's skill is displayed in the proper adjustment of the period, and in the accurate distribution of the members, rather than in the antithesis of words, or in any laboured adaptation of the parallelisms.

Having now gone through the several topics, of which I purposed to treat in my investigation of the nature of the Hebrew poetry, it is time that my present undertaking should draw towards a conclusion. If in the prosecution of my design, I have by my industry been able to accomplish any thing that may be deemed satisfactory, it is but common justice to attribute the greatest part of my success to you, Gentlemen, who have condescended to look with a propitious



eye upon my endeavours, and to invigorate my application by your attention and partiality. When, indeed, I first meditated this system of instruction, I foresaw, as well from the native sublimity and obscurity of the subject, as from the extreme antiquity of the Hebrew writings, much subtile investigation, much difficult explication, much doubtful assertion, and dangerous error. I foresaw too, and daily experience confirmed my apprehensions, that in this maze of science, the vestiges and the documents of the learned would be frequently found but imperfect guides. That my courage did not utterly forsake me in the course of my undertaking, is to be attributed entirely to the favour and encouragement which I received from you. I had the satisfaction to find my plan meet with the approbation of some of the greatest and most eminent characters in the learned world, as being neither inconsistent with the design of this institution, the dignity of this University, nor the profit and utility of the students. I had often the singular pleasure of seeing, among my auditors, many persons, to whom it would better become me to apply for instruction in this and in every other branch of literature; and the young men, for whose benefit this institution was established, I have found ever diligent and constant in their attendance: all which testimonies of your favour, unless I accounted as obligations, I should think either too arrogantly of myself, or too disrespectfully of you. To all of you, therefore, I feel, and shall for ever feel myself obliged: the remembrance of your kindness will, in every vicissitude of my condition, be pleasing to me; nor is there any danger of my suffering that to escape my memory, which I must ever esteem the great ornament of my life.

But to return to a point which is of more importance, and which has indeed been the principal object of all my endeavours. I should now think myself called upon, in the last place, to exhort this assembly of accomplished youths to an assiduous application to these studies, but that I confess I think you rather demand commendation than advice. For the Hebrew language, which was for a series of years in a manner obsolete and neglected, has been lately cultivated by you with such attention and application, and has obtained so respectable a place among the other branches of erudition, that it seems, through your means, to have recovered, after a tedious exile, all its former dignity and importance. Proceed, therefore, in the same career with the same ardour and success, and consider it as a work worthy of your utmost exertions to illustrate and cultivate this

department of literature. You will find it no less elegant and agreeable, than useful and instructive ; abounding in information no less curious for its extent and variety, than for its great importance and venerable sanctity ; deserving the attention of every liberal mind ; essential to all who would be proficient in theology : a branch of literature, in a word, which will confer credit upon yourselves, will be an honour to the university, and an advantage to the church. I congratulate you, gentlemen, on having an instructor,<sup>25</sup> who, from his authority, example, assiduity, and information, will be found in no respect wanting to your profit and accommodation ; a gentleman no less eminent for his abilities and profound erudition, than for the candour, urbanity, and gentleness of his manners. He will unfold to you the inexhaustible treasures of oriental literature, he will open to your view an unbounded field of science and of fame. It is sufficient for me to have discovered to you a few of the more delightful retreats of this paradise : and could I flatter myself that my endeavours have been so fortunate as to allure or excite any to these studies, or even to stimulate and keep alive your attention to this department of literature, I should think that I had received the most honourable, the most grateful reward of my labours.

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<sup>25</sup> Dr. THOMAS HUNT, King's Professor of Hebrew, and Laudian Professor of the Arabic language.

## BRIEF CONFUTATION

OF

### BISHOP HARE'S SYSTEM OF HEBREW METRE.

It is well known, that an hypothesis was invented by the late bishop Hare concerning the Hebrew metres; and the arguments, which he had advanced in its favour, appeared so conclusive to some persons of great erudition, as to persuade them, that the learned prelate had fortunately revived the knowledge of the true Hebrew versification, after an oblivion of more than two thousand years; and that he had established his opinion by such irresistible proofs, as to place it beyond the utmost efforts of controversy. Whoever, indeed, encounters it in such a manner, as only to call in question some particular part, to intimate only an occasional scruple, or to attack but one or two of his arguments, will, doubtless, "attempt in vain<sup>1</sup> to root out of their minds an opinion which has been so deeply implanted and established by the authority of so great a man: much less will any person obtain credit who shall affirm, that he has discovered what was not discovered by the learned prelate, unless by the strongest arguments he not only overthrows the hypothesis which he rejects, but confirms his own. Avoiding therefore every subterfuge, I shall come immediately to the point, and demonstrate by the clearest and most decisive instances, which is the only method of extorting assent from the incredulous, that I have actually discovered the nature and principles of this poetry," and those directly contrary to the system which he has adopted. I shall, on this occasion, make use of the same example that bishop Hare himself has chosen; which, when properly considered, will, I think, sufficiently explain and prove my opinion; and at the same time effectually overturn his hypothesis.

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<sup>1</sup> See Hare's Preface to the Psalms, at the beginning.



## PSALM CXI.

1. odéh javóh becól lebáb,	i.
2. besód jesárim véredáh.	
3. gédolim mayasé javóh,	ii.
4. dérusím lecól chepzéhem.	
5. hód vehádar póyaló,	iii.
6. vezídkathó yomédeth láyad.	
7. zecér yasáh leníphlotháv;	iv.
8. chánun vérachúm javóh.	
9. téreph náthan líreáv,	v.
10. jízcor léyolám beritho.	
11. coách mayasáv hígid leyámo,	vi.
12. lathéth lahém nachálath goím.	
13. mayasé jadáv eméth umíspat;	vii.
14. neemánim cól pikúdav:	
15. semúcim láyad léyolám,	viii.
16. yásuim beeméth vejásar.	
17. pedúth salách leyámo,	ix.
18. zivah léyolám beritho.	
19. kádos vánorá semó;	x.
20. resith chocmáh jiráth javóh.	
21. sécél tób lecól yoséhem,	xi.
22. tehílatú yomédeth láyad.	

From this alphabetic Psalm, which is divided into its proper verses according to the initial letters, and restored to its proper numbers without any violation of the text, without even any change of the Masoretic vowels (except that with bishop Hare, I read *javoh*) the canons of the Hebrew metre are to be collected and established.

I. <sup>2</sup> In the first place then, in the Hebrew poetry the feet are

<sup>2</sup> The following are the principal rules or canons of bishop Hare :

1. In Hebrew poetry all the feet are two syllables.
2. No regard is paid to the quantity of the syllables.
3. When the number of the syllables is even, the verse is Trochaic, placing the accent on the first syllable.
4. If the number of syllables be odd, they are to be accounted Iambics, and the accent is to be placed on the second syllable, in order to preserve the rhythm.
5. The periods mostly consist of two verses, often three or four, and sometimes more.

not all dissyllables: for in verse 3, 11, 16,—*šin māṣa—cōach māṣa*—*šin be—are* Dactyls; in verse 13, 14, *māṣāṣ, neemā—are* Anapests: contrary to the first canon of bishop Hare.

II. Attention must always be paid to the quantity of the syllables, for the same word, as often as it occurs, is always of the same quantity; for instance, *javōh, lecol*, are constantly Iambics, *līṣad* is always a Trochaic, *māṣāṣ* an Anapest; *kēṣolām* is uniformly an Amphimaser: *beritho, pomēdeth*, is an Amphibrachis: contrary to the second canon of bishop Hare.

III. The verses are either Trochaic, which admit a Dactyl; or Iambic, which admit an Anapest; but it by no means follows, that a verse is either the one or the other, from its consisting of an even or odd number of syllables. Those indeed which consist of an even number of syllables, are, for the most part, Iambic, as verse 1, 2, 7, 13, 14, 15, 20; but they are also sometimes Trochaic, as verse 3, 4, 10, 18, 21; and those which consist of an odd number of syllables are mostly Trochaic, as verse 5, 8, 9, 11, 16, 19; they are however sometimes Iambic, as verse 6, 12, 17, 22: contrary to the third and fourth canon.

IV. The verses of the same period are of different kinds, period iii, iv, vi, viii, ix, x, xi, a few only excepted, as period i, ii, v, vii: and those which are of the same kind seldom agree in the number of syllables and feet: for instance, in period ii. and v. the first verse is a Trochaic Dimeter Catalectic, the second a Trochaic Dimeter Acatalectic; in period vii. the first is an Iambic Dimeter Hypercatalectic, the second an Iambic Dimeter Catalectic: the only instance of verses agreeing in a kind, agreeing also in syllables and feet is in period i. and those are Iambics: and this is contrary to the sixth, seventh, and eighth canons.

V. All the periods consist of only two verses; for properly *kopā* and *resh* constitute the penultimate, and *shin* and *tau* the ultimate period; as also appeared to the learned Cappell:<sup>3</sup> this is contrary to the fifth canon.

6. The verses of the same period, with few exceptions, are of the same kind.

7. The Trochaic verses mostly agree in the number of feet: there are however a few exceptions.

8. In the Iambic verses the feet are mostly unequal, though in some instances they are equal.

9. Each verse does not contain a distinct sense.

See HARE's Pref. p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> See CAPPELL, Crit. Sac. Lib. i. cap. xii. 11.



VI. Each verse has one particular sense : contrary to the ninth canon.

" That what I have advanced as true and indisputable, is most true, appears from the examples which I have adduced ; and whoever reads attentively the book of Psalms, will find similar instances in almost every page."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See Hare's Preface, p. 31. The reader has doubtless observed, that to establish our two last canons, and perhaps the others, a general proposition is deduced from a particular instance : viz. so it is in this Psalm, and so, therefore, it must be in all Hebrew poems whatever : in this, however, I only copy Bishop Hare ; for to say the truth, upon this mode of reasoning, and begging the question at the same time, depends his whole hypothesis.

I find these observations have greatly displeased Dr. THOMAS EDWARDS, a strenuous advocate for Bishop Hare's Metres. Towards the conclusion of his Dissertation lately published, he asserts, that I did not understand what I presumed to censure : and to this accusation I indeed plead guilty. For I will freely confess, that I neither did understand, nor do I yet understand, what metre can exist without any distinction of long and short syllables, or what can be meant by Trochaic, Iambic, and Anacreontic feet and verses, where no regard is paid to the quantity of the syllables. Nor do I understand any better, what purpose the confutation of my hypothesis can answer, since I gave it myself as futile and false, and since the futility of it was one of the strongest arguments against the hypothesis of Hare. This argument can only be done away by proving, that my hypothesis is not founded upon the same, or upon principles equally clear and certain with Bishop Hare's : this unfortunately his defender has not done, nor indeed can he do.

With regard to his accusation, that I have acted dogmatically, and that I have upon my own authority, and without any regard to reason, affirmed, that the hypothesis of Bishop Hare depends altogether upon his taking for granted the very point to be proved ; in order to exonerate myself from so invidious an imputation, and in order to confirm what I before had advanced, I must request the reader's attention to the following particulars.

The cxith Psalm is proposed as an example, and is divided into verses, whence the laws of Hebrew versification are to be deduced. We grant that in this Psalm the verses are rightly distinguished, since it is alphabetical, and the members of each period are nearly equal. But what is this to the establishment of a certain rule for the division of others, which are neither alphabetical, nor seem capable of a regular and equal distribution of the sentences and members ? Indeed, such is the difficulty of Bishop Hare's hypothesis in this respect, that according to it a number of the Psalms are divided, not only arbitrarily and oddly, but inelegantly, injudiciously, contrary to the genius of the Hebrew poetry, and contrary to every appearance of truth. We will take for an example the first Psalm, on which the author prides himself not a little. But when divided into verses, by what rule is it accented ? Why in this rather than any other



Since this is the case, since I have deduced happily the abstract principles of the Hebrew metre from this Psalm, or rather explained clearly such as readily presented themselves, and have reduced them to an art, easy, perfect, and consistent; depending upon principles

manner? How is it proved, that when the number of syllables is even, the verse is Trochaic, when odd, Iambic? From the nature and principles of Trochaic and Iambic verse? By no means—(for in the Greek and Latin Trochaics and Iambics, the case is directly contrary,) but merely from the pleasure and will of the author. Why then may not I, or any other person, affix different accents to this hundred and eleventh, or any Psalm, and so turn the Trochaics of Bishop Hare into Iambics, and his Iambics into Trochaics? By what rule too are the syllables numbered? According to the Masoretic punctuation? By no means; for the Masoretic number of syllables is altered, and that, as by a previous rule, or according to an established system of metre, which existed before the punctuation; as from this Psalm so ordered and illustrated, the rules of metre are afterwards to be collected. “But I do not desert the Masoretic punctuation, unless an erroneous punctuation interferes with the metre.” This would be a sound argument, if it were previously determined what these rules of metre were. But for what good reason are all trisyllabic metres excluded from the Hebrew poetry? “Because, truly, if the trisyllabic feet were admitted, a distinction of long and short syllables would have place necessarily in the Hebrew poetry.” And why should it not? “In Hebrew poetry there is no respect at all to the quantity of the syllables.” A most extraordinary assertion, and scarcely credible! But that so it might be, learn from the testimony of your eyes and ears. “For from this Psalm it is evident, that no regard is paid to quantity in the Hebrew poetry; since in the fourth and fifth verses, not to mention other instances, the *le* and *re* are long. On the other hand, in the fifteenth and twenty-second, *mu* in *semucim* and *hîl* in *tehilathu*, are short.” That is, according to Hare, the shortest syllable may be made use of instead of the longest (such indeed he acknowledges them to be) in his Trochaic and Iambic measures; and on the other hand, the longest may be introduced instead of the shortest: of which this Psalm affords the precedent: and on the authority of this precedent, a law is framed to serve in all other cases: and when we ask, upon other evidence, the reason of the fact, he refers us to his own authority and his own example. For, indeed, says he, this is the plain state of the case; “that this, and all that I have urged upon this subject, is undoubtedly fact, is plain from the examples which I have produced, and must strike every reasonable person who only looks into a single page of the book of Psalms.” I confess it, indeed, most learned Prelate, if we look into your Psalms: but I fear we shall then be very little nearer the truth, since it is by no means a decided point, that your Psalms are rightly and judiciously divided into verses, feet, and syllables.

See “A larger Confutation of Bishop Hare’s Hebrew Metres, in a Letter to Dr. Edwards, London, 1764.”

certain and self-evident: but not taking those liberties in which Bishop Hare has prolixly indulged himself, so as to make the same word sometimes Trochaic, sometimes Iambic, sometimes a Dissyllable, and sometimes a Trisyllable; I may reasonably indulge myself in the hope, that the candid reader will prefer my hypothesis to that of Bishop Hare. This at least I trust I may expect, that he will treat them upon equal terms, and allow to each the same authority, that is—NONE AT ALL.

In the same manner every hypothesis, which pretends to define the laws of Hebrew metre, and to prescribe the numbers, the feet, the scanning of the lines, may, I think, be easily upset: for to that hypothesis another directly contrary, yet confirmed by arguments equally forcible, may, I am persuaded, be successfully opposed.

With regard to the opinion of those who suppose the whole art of Hebrew metre to consist in a similarity of termination to each verse; though it has acquired some popularity and authority in the learned world, I think it by far the most ill-founded of all; and I think its absurdity so obvious, that with the utmost ease it may be detected. Since the endings of the verses are defined in some of the alphabetical poems, and since it is manifest, that in these the verses do not end alike, that no art or attention has been bestowed upon that point, it follows of course that the art of Hebrew versification does not consist in making verses with similar endings.





## NOTES.



## NOTES.

### NOTES ON LECTURE I.

[A. p. 9.] *Time of commencing these Lectures.*

THE Prælector of poetry at Oxford is obliged by the statute to read his inaugural lecture the first Tuesday in the term subsequent to his election; and it appears by the university register, that Mr. Lowth was elected to the professorship on the 21st of May, 1741, in the vacation between Easter and Act term. As this vacation is only thirteen days, commencing the Thursday before Whitsunday, and ending the Wednesday after Trinity Sunday, the longest interval that could possibly happen between his election and his first lecture is somewhat less than three weeks: It might probably be much shorter. The usual term of the professorship is ten years.

GREGORY.

[B. p. 11.] *Utility the ultimate object of poetry.*

Of poetry in the earlier stages of human improvement, of the poetry which the Bible exhibits, utility was doubtless not only the ultimate, but the immediate, object. The poetical costume in which the most ancient sages clothed their thoughts, was as much a matter of necessity as of choice. The feelings, the language, and the habits of men were all poetical; nor would any instructions in regard to their civil or moral duties have been effectual, unless presented in a poetical form: neither was it possible for the sages of those times to exhibit their own feelings and speak their own language, without exhibiting the feelings and speaking the language of poetry. In the gradual advancement of society, the maxims of polity and the precepts of virtue began to assume a didactic form; but poetry was still cultivated for the delight it afforded, and, like the rural beauties of spring, served the double purpose of utility and pleasure. That poetry, which, like the paintings of the artist, is designed



merely for pleasure, belongs to a later and more luxurious age; but even this is laudable, provided the poet is careful to make the pleasure innocent, and does not entirely lose sight of the original design of his art. The God of nature has created many things in the material world, whose only purpose is to afford delight; and why may not the same object be sought in some of the productions of the intellect? (Compare Herder, *Briefe*, Th. I. S. 35 ff.) S.

[C. p. 12.] *Authority of Virgil's Georgics.*

Of this work Seneca speaks in the following terms: "Virgilius noster, qui non quid verissime, sed quid decentissime diceretur, aspexit; nec agricolas docere voluit, sed legentes delectare. Epist. 86. But Columella, certainly a much better authority in matters of agriculture, had formed a very different estimate of Virgil's merits. He often quotes the *Georgics* with the highest approbation, and never with censure. "Haec autem consequemur, si verissimo vati velut oraculo crediderimus, dicenti, *Ventos et varium.*" Lib. I. 4. "Utamurque saepius auctoritate divini carminis." Lib. VII. 3. Even in regard to the only instance of the alleged inaccuracy of Virgil, which Seneca adduces, (the time of sowing millet); the groundlessness of the philosopher's censures may be seen by consulting Columella, Lib. II. 9. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* XVIII. 7. Pallad. III. 3. LOWTH.

[D. p. 16.] *Poetry, philosophy, and history.*

Our author does, indeed, here "seem to attribute too much to his favourite occupation." The whole passage respecting the comparative utility of poetry, philosophy, and history, appears to me to savour rather of rhetorical exaggeration than of sober truth. They are each useful, and equally so in their respective places; and to elevate one at the expense of the others, shows more of the warm affections of an enthusiast than of the severe accuracy of an instructor. If poetry be more general and more powerful in its influence than philosophy, philosophy is necessary rightly to limit and regulate the dominion of poetry: if "poetry can range uncontrolled over the wide expanse of nature," while history must "confine itself to that path which the stubbornness of fact has prescribed;" then, though the former may be better adapted to excite a love and admiration for what is amiable and great, the instructions of the latter are at least more proper to direct the practice of it in the real

business of life; if poetry is the original instructress of mankind in the earlier stages of improvement, yet, as society advances, and men begin to reason as well as feel, the enchantments of fable must give place to the less pleasing, but more accurate, teachings of philosophy and history.

[E. p. 18.] *Translation of the Ode.*

Verdant myrtle's branchy pride  
 Shall my thirsty blade entwine:  
 Such, HARMODIUS, deck'd thy side,  
 Such, ARISTOGITON, thine.  
 Noblest youths! in islands blest,  
 Not like recreant idlers dead;  
 You with fleet PELIDES rest,  
 And with godlike DIOMED.  
 Myrtle shall our brows entwine,  
 While the Muse your fame shall tell;  
 'Twas at Pallas' sacred shrine,  
 At your feet the tyrant fell.  
 Then in Athens all was peace,  
 Equal laws and liberty:  
 Nurse of arts and eye of Greece,  
 People valiant, firm and free!—SIR WM. JONES.

ATHENÆUS, Lib XV. This *Σχολιον* (or convivial song) some have attributed to Alcæus: but not conformably with strict chronology; for Alcæus flourished about eighty years before the death of Hipparchus. But HESYCHIUS has preserved the name of the author from oblivion, directly assigning the poem to CALLISTRATUS. This poem was so celebrated at Athens, that it was sung at almost every banquet, as we learn from ARISTOPHANES, *Αχαρν.* 977.

"Grim visag'd war shall never be my guest,  
 "Nor at my table sing Harmodius' praise:  
 "Such lawless riot mars our temp'rate joys."

"He shall never sing Harmodius with me:" that is, he shall never be my guest. Upon this passage the SCHOLIAST: "In their convivial meetings they sung a certain ballad of Harmodius, which begins *Φιλτατὲ Ἀρμόδιε κ. τ. λ.*" Also in the same comedy, 1092, these songs are enumerated among the other apparatus of the entertainment:

"The sprightly dance: Harmodius! thy delight."

There is an allusion to the same, *Αυσις.* 633.

"My sword I'll bear hid in a myrtle branch;  
 "And like Aristogiton walk in arms."



It is evident from this ballad, that the conspirators, when they assaulted Hipparchus, concealed their daggers in those myrtle garlands, which, if I mistake not, were carried by all who assisted at the sacred rites of the *Panathenaic* sacrifice: and this is indeed confirmed by the Scholiast upon Aristophanes, in the passage before referred to: "For these men, Harmodius and Aristogiton, hastily drawing their swords out of the myrtle boughs, fell furiously upon the tyrant." Hence perhaps arose the custom, that whoever sung any convivial song in company, always held a branch of myrtle in his hand. See PLUTARCH, Symp. Quest. 1. LOWTH.

[F. p. 21.] *Use of poetry to an orator.*

"It will not be inconsistent with these studies to amuse yourself with poetry:—Tully indeed appears to me to have acquired that luminous and splendid diction which he possessed, by occasionally resorting to such occupations." QUINCT. Lib. X. 5.

It may be doubted whether CICERO was indebted for his excellence as an orator to the cultivation of poetry. He would have been accounted but a moderate orator, if his orations had only equalled his poetry, who

Antoni gladios poterat contemnere, si sic  
Omnia dixisset.

I do not expect from CICERO the polish and perfection of VIRGIL, but one might at least have hoped to meet in his verse some of that fire and fancy which appears in his oratory. The case however is far otherwise, for he appears not deficient in art, but in nature; in that energy and enthusiasm, which is called the *poetic furor*.

Upon very mature consideration, indeed, I will venture to profess, that however poetry may contribute to form an accomplished orator, I hardly ever expect to find the same person excellent in both arts. The language of poetry has something in it so different and contrary to that of oratory, that we seldom find those who have applied much to the one, rise above mediocrity in the other. The chief excellence of an orator consists in perspicuity, and in such a degree of perspicuity as is necessary to render the composition intelligible even to the common people: but, though obscurity be not a necessary adjunct of a good poem, it must be considerably superior to the language and comprehension of the vulgar, to rank above mediocrity. The orator must not deviate from the common and beaten track of language; the poet must aim at a happy boldness of diction, and



wander into new paths. The orator, in order to be generally understood, is necessarily more copious and prolix not only than the poet, but than all other writers; the chief commendation of the poet is brevity. A poem is always enervated by circumlocutions, unless new lights of sentiment and language are thrown in. For these and other reasons, I am of opinion, that if a well-cultivated genius for poetry should apply earnestly to oratory, he might indeed prove such an orator as would please a learned audience, and not be displeasing to the populace; but such a man will never prove a very popular orator, on whom the people shall gaze with admiration and rapture, and who shall acquire a perfect ascendancy over all their passions: and he who is by nature an orator, may possibly be a poet for the multitude, or by art and study, and the imitation of the best models, may make a decent proficiency, but he never can be a great and divine poet.

MICHAELIS.

The views of Michaelis may be admitted as correct without detracting from the truth or the value of Quintilian's remark at the head of this note. Though no man can reasonably expect to excel both as an orator and a poet, inasmuch as the intellectual habits requisite for eminence in the one, are inconsistent with a high degree of excellence in the other; yet the orator may derive great assistance in his art from the study of poetry. This study is peculiarly calculated to give him copiousness and smoothness of diction, to lay open to his mind the richest stores of imagery, to warm the feelings, elevate the imagination, and correct the taste; to give him facility and skill in the use of language and the management of the passions.

Especially is the study of the sacred poetry useful to the student of sacred eloquence. Who knows all the avenues to the human heart, so well as He who made the heart? And what compositions have so deep and permanent an effect on the feelings of men, as the poetic parts of the Bible when rightly understood? He who would learn most effectually to arouse men from their sensuality and sin, and excite them to the love of spiritual things, must derive his modes of persuasion, as well as his principles of doctrine, from a thorough and religious study of the sacred pages. S.

[G. p. 23.] *Original design of poetry.*

The most ancient poetry as well as music, according to Plato, was "that which was addressed to the Deity, under the appellation of hymns." De Leg. Lib. III. SÆTONIUS has illustrated this sub-

ject in a very elegant manner, though he is a little unfortunate in his etymology, a circumstance not uncommon with the old grammarians. "When first," says he, "mankind emerged from a state of barbarism into the habits of civilized life, and began to be acquainted in some measure with their own nature and that of the gods, they contented themselves with a moderate style of living, and a language just proportioned to their wants; whatever was grand or magnificent in either, they dedicated to their deities. As, therefore, they built temples more elegant by far than their own habitations, and made the shrines and images of their divinities much larger than the human form; so they thought it necessary to celebrate them in a style of greater majesty than common; in language more splendid, harmonious, and agreeable. This species of composition, because it assumed a certain distinct form, was called a *poem*, from the word *ποίησις*, and those who cultivated it were called *poets*." From a fragment of a work not extant, concerning poetry, quoted by Isidorus, Orig. Lib. viii. c. 7. LOWTH.

It may be doubted, however, whether poetry were not applied to the purposes of war as early as to those of religion. Poetry was the only species of composition that existed in the earliest ages of the world; and it would of course be employed on subjects in which men felt the deepest interest. If man, in his state of innocence, expressed his feelings in poetry, the hymns which he composed were undoubtedly of a religious kind; but as men existed after the fall, victories over their enemies and the achievements of their heroes held as strong possession of their thoughts as the worship of their gods. Consequently, in the earliest poetical remains of all nations, we find warlike and devotional songs going hand in hand: the two subjects indeed are almost constantly united in the same poem, the gods being more frequently praised for granting victory, than for any other blessing. One of the most ancient metrical productions now extant is the song of Moses by the Red Sea, in which the children of Israel return thanks to God for the overthrow of their Egyptian enemies. If we examine the first poetical remains that occur on the pages of the Bible, we shall find none of them to be of a strictly devotional character. The oldest specimen of poetry which the world can produce, is the address of Lamech to his wives (Gen. 4: 23), which is certainly not devotional, and was probably occasioned by the death of a man in single combat with Lamech; or, as some ingenious critics have supposed, by the invention of the sword or other



metallic weapon by his son Tubal-Cain. (See Rosenmueller in loc.; and Herder, Geist, Th. I. S. 309). The next that occur are the blessings of Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 27: 27—29, 39, 40. xlix.), which are testaments rather than hymns. Passing onward, we next find the triumphal song of the Hebrews at the passage of the Red Sea, (Ex. 15: 1—19); then a war-song, (Num. 21: 14—16); then a song that was sung by the children of Israel at the opening of a well, (Num. 21: 17—20); then a quotation from a war-song of the Amorites, celebrating their victories over Moab, with some additional stanzas by the Israelites, (Num. 21: 27—30). These are facts which seem hardly to accord with the theory of Lowth. (See Lect. IV. Note F.) S.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE II.

[A. p. 27.] *The Bible a proper subject of criticism.*

The remarks of our author on this point merit repeated perusal and close attention. Erroneous and vague notions of the nature of inspiration have hidden the beauties of the Bible, darkened its meaning, and exposed it to the attacks of infidels. The biblical student, at the very commencement of his investigations, must learn to *distinguish the things that differ*; and not ascribe divinity to that which is necessarily human. Paper and ink do not change their nature and become imperishable, because employed on the word of God; men continue to be men, though under the influence of the Holy Spirit; and human language does not cease to be human language, when used to convey the messages of divine inspiration. Our Creator designed that the Bible should be written by men, in the language of men, for the use of men; and that it should address itself to the common sense and the common feelings of men. When we read it, therefore, we should read it as men; we should judge of it as men; we should expect to find in it the same diversity of character and the same variety of expression which we find among men; similar means of acquiring knowledge and communicating thought, like exhibitions of passion, and like weaknesses and frailties. The more we read it in this manner, the more likely shall we be to attain its true meaning. We should always remember that the instructions are all divine; but that the mode of instruction continually varies with the instrument employed and the people addressed. We



should bear it in mind, that the Scriptures were not written for ourselves alone, but for all the nations of the world; for people of the most diverse climates, characters, and habits; and if some parts appear comparatively useless to us, we are not therefore to infer that there are no human beings to whom they may be useful: for are we the standard of the whole world? and must God make all the human race after our model? The Bible was not originally even addressed to us, but to the people of the East; and to their habits, feelings, and modes of thought, is its costume conformed, and not to ours. Let these things be remembered, and let us read the Bible as men ought to read a book addressed to their common sense, and not designed for themselves only, but for all their race; and we shall never more be troubled about the inspiration of the Scriptures, because some of the books were written by authors now unknown, or compiled from other works now lost; or because the pious characters presented have human frailties, or wicked men are introduced using the language and exhibiting the conduct of wicked men; or because some sentiments are not conveyed in just the form which we should have chosen, or, there are some things of which we cannot see the utility. All these circumstances necessarily result from the design of the Bible, as a book committed to the hands of men for the common use of all the human race; and it is by neglecting to consider them, that Christians are led to doubt and infidels emboldened to scoff. Sober criticism alone will enable us to make the requisite distinction; steadily to believe the truth, and effectually to defend it. (Compare Herder, *Briefe*, Th. I. SS. 1—4, 198.) S.

[B. p. 28.] *Ancient opinion respecting the divine origin of poetry.*

It is well known that, throughout the ancient world, poets were called prophets, and poetry was supposed to derive its origin from divine inspiration. Our author here intimates that this opinion might have originated in some obscure traditions respecting the really divine origin of the most ancient poetry, the poetry of the Bible. This may be true: but there is another mode of accounting for the fact, which ought not to be overlooked. This is very ably exhibited in the following quotation, which I am unwilling to translate, because I know not how I can do it without suffering the spirit of the piece to evaporate. S.

“Quicumque ad poëseos originem rationemque germanam respicere voluerit, is agnoscet, excelsum divinumque aliquid natura hu-

ius facultatis contineri, paucis tantum iisque excellentissimis ingeniis concessum. Quum enim Deus omni suo operi pulcritudinem formamque perfectam, et in varietate incredibilem ordinem, consensumque omnium partium ad unum finem altissime expresserit, quam uno nomine harmoniam vocare licet, atque ita suae perfectionis quamdam quasi umbram et effigiem quasi in speculo exhibuerit, noluit omnes homines tam admirabilis rei esse spectatores stupidos otiososque. Igitur indidit paucorum quorundam mentibus vim et virtutem, qua hanc operis sui perfectionem non tantum perciperent et observarent, sed etiam persentiscerent, eique singulari quodam animi motu sensuque responderent. Quem animi consensum et quasi concentum cum Dei operibus, homo imaginandi facultate ad actum vitamque deducens, et oratione concitata, numerosa, atque ad harmoniam composita experimens, *poëta*, id est, Dei imitator, *creator*, dictus fuit."

"Sed haec quidem, ne forte nonnullis audaciora et subobscura videantur, paullo diligentius persequenda sunt. Attendite igitur, quid sit illud, quo poëta differat a philosopho. Ambo enim contemplatione operis Dei percelluntur, sed dispari uterque modo et effectū. Est autem harmonia illa et pulcritudo, quam diximus, conspicua, tam in universo Dei opificio, quod vocamus naturam vel mundum, quem et Graeci *κόσμον* dicentes pulcritudinem simul eius aptamque compositionem significant, quam in partibus, quibus mundus constat, quae singulae in suo genere perfectae et sinibus suis respondentes creatae sunt, imo in toto regimine humani generis, omnibusque et singulis, quae Dei providentia efficit, quorumque homines spectatores esse voluit. Horum igitur admiratio philosophum impellit, ut in rerum causas inquirat, naturae vires perscrutetur, multa inter se conferat, multa eruat, quibus eorum, quae sunt, rationem reddere, deque iis iudicare possit. Aliud maiusque poëtae est munus. Scilicet, cum in quibuslibet rebus percipit pulcritudinem, magnitudinem, varietatem, simplicitatem, cum agnoscit Deum, excitatur in eius animo non tantum admiratio, sed maxime vis illa singularis naturae respondens, de qua diximus. Mox altiores in pectore surgunt motus: exaestuat imaginandi vis, a rerum praesentium sensusque fugientium angustiiis se extollit ad universum: quae in oculis posita sunt, exaggerat, ornat, multis ac miris modis auget, miscet, componit, inde sibi creat mundum, eumque vita et actu animat: quod spectaculum mente conceptum tanquam verum, aliis ut testibus et spectatoribus depingit et in ipsa illa pictura, dum verbis utitur velut colori-



bus, harmoniam pulcritudinemque universo a creatore impressam, forma et modulatione carminis imitatur."

"Videtur iam, quatenam sit poësi vis et indoles ab ipso Deo tributa. Nam hominem ad magna et aeterna destinatum, cuiusque adeo omnem excellentiam non capit angusta huius vitae rerumque adspectabilium scena, erigit, et ex hisce vinculis eductum in immensis phantasiae campis, tanquam in regno suo, exspatiari iubet. Ita rerum praesentium despicientia, malorum oblivio, generosiores animi motus, delectatio exquisita, futurae felicitatis aeternae spes sensusque a poësi excitantur et nutriuntur."

"Fuit igitur poëseos eadem origo quae religionis, et talem habet cum ea societatem et cognationem, ut sine religione aliqua nulla sit poësis. Nam perceptio illa pulcritudinis huius mundi, quae poëtae propria est, animum ad naturae opificem, ut ab umbrae et imaginis contemplatione ad ipsum perfectum exemplar, evehit. Quare et antiquissimis temporibus, ac velut a suis inde incunabulis, poësis in celebrandis Dei laudibus viguisse reperitur. Neque postea, cum eadem ad hominum delectationem et exprimendos quoscunque animi motus, amorem, iram, dolorem, tanquam a coelo descenderet, omnem illam maiestatem suam deposuit. Nam quaecunque canit poësis, iis nobilitatem divinitatemque aliquam attribuit, nec quisquam poëtae sanctum illud nomen meretur, cuius animus ad naturae Dei quae sensum se obfirmavit."

S. F. I. RAVIUS de poeticae facultatis excellentia et perfectione spectata in tribus poetarum principibus, scriptore Jobi, Homero et Ossiano. Lugd. Batav. 1800. p. 73 seqq.

### NOTES ON LECTURE III.

[A. p. 33.] *Poetic diction of the Hebrews.*

The poetical particles, which the grammarians in general call paragogic, (or redundant) are as follows: ה added to nouns: Numb. xxiv. 3. Ps. l. 10. lxxix. 2. cxiv. 8. civ. 11, 20. Isai. lvi. 9, (it occurs here twice.) Zeph. ii. 14.

"בני Numb. xxiv. 3. as also הוה, Psal. l. 10, etc. seems to be a pleonasmus peculiar to the Syriac. For thus it is common for that people to express themselves: ברה דדוד, the son *his* of David, Matth. i. 1. פומה דמריא, the countenance *his* of the Lord, Is. i. 20.



לְמַעַן. Psal. cxiv. 8. It was formerly read לְמַעַן, as appears from the Septuagint, *λὺνας ὕδατον*." H.

י added to nouns, adverbs, prepositions, is common in the poets: also to the participles, Benoni, sing. masc. and fem. Gen. xlix. 11. Psal. ci. 5. Prov. xxviii. 16. Jer. xxii. 23. xlix. 16. li. 13. Ezek. xxvii. 3. This, however, the Masorites have sometimes rashly expunged.

Concerning the י, when added to verbs in the second pers. fem. sing. pret. I have sometimes my doubts whether it be an error or not. Certainly the Masorites are of opinion that it should always be expunged. See Jer. xiii. 21. xxii. 23. xxxi. 21, and Ezek. xvi. where it occurs eleven times. Now it is not in the least probable that in one chapter the same error should so frequently take place. "But in these eleven places many MSS. confirm the Masoretic Keri,\* for the י is wanting." K. It may also be a Syriac gloss, which is the opinion of CAPEL, Crit. Sac. Lib. iii. c. xiii. 8. Though there is a passage, where it occurs in the same person masc. כִּי אָמַרְתִּי, "because thou hast said," Psal. lxxxix. 3. So indeed almost all the old interpreters, except the Chaldean paraphrast, have taken it; and rightly, indeed, if regard is to be paid to the context or the parallelism of the sentences. But this I rather esteem an error, though the Masorites have not noted it as such.

"Verbs in which the י is added to the second pers. fem. sing. pret. follow the Syriac and Arabic form." H.

מִן for מִן, or מִן, occurs frequently in the Hebrew poetry. See Ps. ii. 3, 4, 5. where it appears five times: sometimes in the singular for י; see Isai. xlv. 15. liii. 8. Job xx. 23. xxii. 2. xxvii. 23. Ps. xi. 7. It is very often merely paragogic, or redundant. מִן simply seems to be altogether poetical; it occurs in Neh. ix. 11. and is taken from the song of Moses, Exod. xv. 5.—It is, however, not the same with prefixes or suffixes.

"Isai. liii. 8. לְמַן. The Septuagint in this place is *ἡγθῃ εἰς θάνατον* (he was led unto death): in this it follows the Arabic version, which reads לְמַן." H.

Of these particles, which I call poetical, there occur very few examples in the prose parts of Scripture; indeed I do not know that there are any more than the following: י, Gen. i. 24. but instead of הָיָה אֵרֶץ, the Samaritan copy has הָיָה אֶרֶץ, as it is also expressed in

\* A Masoretic term for a various reading.

the Hebrew in the following verse.  $\text{ו}$ , Gen. xxiii. 39. twice: but it is also wanting in the Samaritan copy: although it may possibly be meant for a pronominal affix. Also in Ruth iii. 3, 4. three times; iv. 5. and in 2 Kings iv. 23. "But in all these places, many MSS. confirm the Masoretic Keri; for  $\text{ו}$  is wanting." K. Lastly,  $\text{ז}$ , Exod. xxxiii. 31. but instead of  $\text{זֶרְשָׁחֲוִי}$ , the Septuagint and the Vulgate read  $\text{זֶרְשָׁחִים}$ , and the context favours this reading.

Hitherto perhaps might be referred the  $\text{ה}$  and  $\text{ו}$  paragoric, and the relative  $\text{ש}$ , which occur more frequently in the poets than elsewhere.

These are most, if not all of them, examples of anomalies, which serve to distinguish particularly the poetic dialect. To demonstrate more fully, how freely they are made use of by the sacred poets, I shall annex a specimen, which Abarbanel exhibits as collected from one short poem, namely, the song of Moses. "You may observe," says he, "in this poem, words sometimes contracted for the sake of the measure, and sometimes lengthened and extended by additional letters and syllables, according as the simple terms may be redundant or deficient. The letters which in this canticle are superadded, are as follows: the Vau and Yod twice in the word  $\text{יִכְסִימוּ}$  for in reality  $\text{כִּסֵּם}$  would have been quite sufficient: the Yod is also added in  $\text{נִאֲדָרִי}$ : the Vau in  $\text{יֹאכֹלֵנוּ}$ ; the Vau in  $\text{הוֹרִישֵׁנוּ}$ : the Vau also in  $\text{כִּסְנוּ}$ ; in  $\text{הַבִּלְעֵנוּ}$ ; in  $\text{אֶחָיוֹנוּ}$ : the Thau in  $\text{אִימְתָהוּ}$ " (In truth this form of nouns appears to be altogether poetical; many examples of which may be found in Glass. Phil. Sac. p. 269; all of them, however, from the poetic and prophetic books.) "The Vau in  $\text{חֲבִירָאֵנוּ}$ ; in  $\text{הַטַּעֲמֵנוּ}$ . The deficient are Yod in  $\text{וּמִטְרַת יָהּ}$ ; so in  $\text{חֲמִלָא מֵהֵם}$  for  $\text{חֲמִלָא}$ : The Vau in  $\text{נִהְלֵנוּ}$  for  $\text{נִהֵלָה}$ ; so also the word  $\text{לֵבָב}$  is deficient in the verse  $\text{נִמְנוֹנוּ כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל כֹּהֵן}$ ; for the prince of the prophets cannot be suspected of erring in grammatical or orthographical accuracy; but the necessity of the verse and a proper regard to harmony so required it." ABRAB. in Mantissa Dissert. ad Libr. COSMII a BUXTORFIO edit. Basil, 1660, p. 412. To these examples one might add from the same canticle  $\text{זֶרְשָׁחֲוִי}$  twice in  $\text{כִּמְנוּ}$ ;  $\text{נ}$  epithetic in  $\text{אֶרְמִמְנֵהוּ}$ , paragoric in  $\text{יִרְמֹזוּן}$ .

Concerning the glosses or foreign words, which occur in the Hebrew poetry; in the present state of the Hebrew language, it is difficult to pronounce on the ruins, as it were, of neighbouring and contemporary dialects: since possibly those words which are commonly taken for Chaldaic (for instance) might have been common to both



languages ; on the contrary, some of those, which more rarely occur, and the etymology of which we are ignorant about, may have been borrowed from the neighbouring dialects. Since, however, there are some words which more frequently occur in the poetical remains, and which are not elsewhere to be found but in the Chaldee ; we may reasonably conjecture concerning these, that they have been introduced into the Hebrew, or at least, after becoming obsolete in common language, might be again made use of : such are the following : בר (a son), קשט (truth), שגא (he increased), שבח (he praised), זקק (he lifted up), עיק (in the Hebrew צוק), (he pressed), etc. Observe Moses, however, in the exordium of his last benediction, Deut. xxxiii. has he not also frequently admitted of Chaldaisms ? What is אהח ? which again occurs ver. 21. What is חבב ? in both form and sense Chaldaic. What דח ? a word scarcely received into common use among the Hebrews till after the Babylonish captivity ; especially since the Hebrew abounded in synonymous terms, expressive of the *Law of God*. (But perhaps this last word in this place is rightly suspected to be an error. See KENNICOTT, Dissert. I. on the Hebrew Text, p. 427 ; and HOUBIGANT in loc.) Isaiah, however, elegantly adopts the Chaldaic form, speaking of Babylon, in the word מדהבה, which in the Hebrew would be מזהבה, Chap. xiv. 4. Not less appositely on the same subject does the Psalmist introduce the word חוללינו, Psalm cxxxvii. 3, which is the Chaldaic for שוללינו, as the Chaldean paraphrast himself allows, who renders it by the synonymous term בזזנו, as elsewhere he renders the word שלל ; (see Ezek. xxvi. 12. xxix. 19. xxxviii. 12, 13.) nor indeed do the other interpreters produce any thing to the purpose. Some instances of grammatical anomalies in the glosses have been detected ; such are the following, Syriac or Chaldaic : כר for כ, Psal. cxvi. thrice ; ciii. five times ; also in Jer. xi. 15. ורר for יר, Psal. cxvi. 12. יך as a termination plur. nom. masc. for ים, Job iv. 2. xxiv. 22. xxxi. 10. and frequently elsewhere ; also Prov. xxxi. 3. Lam. iv. 3. Ezek. xxvi. 18. Mic. iii. 12.

“ מדהבה, אהח, the Samaritan has אהח, in the Arabic form. חבב, מדהבה, are Chaldaic as well as Arabic. חוללינו, but this word seems to have followed the etymology of the Arabic verb חלל, *he bound, he led captive* : whence the Septuagint ἀπογαγοντες ἡμᾶς ; and the Chaldaic בזזנו, *he carried away captive*.” LOWTH and HUNT.



## Hebrew Dialects.

That the Hebrew language, like the Greek, was divided into various dialects, no one who has investigated the subject, can doubt. For four hundred years a part of the nation lived in Egypt, under the influence of the climate, customs, and language of that country; while the remaining part resided among the Nomadic tribes of Arabia and Palestine, and were subject to an influence of a totally different kind. In such circumstances, it was impossible that the language of the different parts of the nation should remain in all respects the same. After the Hebrews had settled in Palestine, circumstances still contributed to make a diversity of dialects in the several districts; for those who lived at the north and bordered on the Syrians, were under a very different influence from those who lived at the south and bordered on the Arabians and Philistines: and it should be recollected that there was then no press, no periodical or popular literature, to counteract the tendency to provincialisms. Thus in Judg. 12: 6, we find that the Ephraimites pronounced  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$  for  $\text{חֲשִׁבִי}$ ; the words  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$ ,  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$ , and  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$ , are all verbs of the same meaning and the same grammatical form, but varying in the final consonant in conformity to different dialects. Moses uses  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$  and  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$  for  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$  and  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$  (Gen. 3: 15. 24: 14);  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$  for  $\text{חֲבִיבִי}$  (Gen. 19: 8), etc.; and the conversation between David and Abigail (1 Sam. xxv.) affords proof of a difference of dialect too palpable to escape the duldest ear. Various other examples might be adduced, but these are sufficient for our present purpose.

Among these various dialects, some one (according to the analogy of other languages) would be most prevalent as the language of books, and, with the occasional admission of words from other dialects according to the circumstances of different writers, would become the language of literature in distinction from that of popular intercourse. Of this difference between the popular and literary dialect we have an example in Ex. 16: 15. When the children of Israel saw the manna, they said:  $\text{מָה־זֶּה}$ , *what is this?* But in the written language of the Hebrews, the word for *what* is uniformly  $\text{מָה־זֶּה}$ , and  $\text{מָה־זֶּה}$  in this sense is Aramaean. (See Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das alte Test.*, Band I. SS. 71—87). S.

## Versification.

These remarks may throw some light on the poetic diction of the Hebrews. It is the design of the poet to elevate his style by a selec-

tion of words that have not been vulgarized by popular use ; and the nature and object of his composition give him greater liberties in this respect than are allowed to other writers. The Greeks have availed themselves of this license to a greater extent than the writers of any other nation ; for their language exhibits an unexampled richness of dialect. Poets use this privilege most frequently ; historians occasionally resort to it ; but didactic writers and orators seldom venture upon it, because, aiming at popular instruction or popular effect, they are obliged to conform their language more to popular usage. This liberty is taken by the Hebrew writers ; and we accordingly find some peculiar forms in the Hebrew language common to the historian and the poets, but used more frequently by the latter than the former ; and some which seem appropriated to poetry. The privilege in question extends itself not only to contemporaneous dialects of the same language, but particularly to antique forms ; and often to forms borrowed from foreign languages. (See Lowth's Note above).

Of the forms common to the historians and poets, the use of the paragoric letters *ג*, *כ*, and *נ*, may be mentioned as examples. (Compare Gen. 1: 24. 31: 39. 3: 4, et al. with Ps. 50: 10. Is. 56: 9. Ezek. xvi. Ps. 101: 5. Prov. 28: 16. Is. 26: 11). These forms, however, seldom occur in prose, except in the more ancient historical books ; and they appear for the most part to be archaisms adopted by the poets.

Of the diction appropriate to poetry, the most concise and satisfactory view which I have ever seen, is given by Professor Stuart, in his Hebrew Chrestomathy (p. 195), to which the student is referred. I will here add a list of a few poetic words, with the corresponding words of a cognate language, that the reader may see that the Hebrew poets, as well as the Greek, made a free use of dialects.

		<i>Poetic.</i>	<i>Cognate.</i>
אלהים	<i>God</i>	אלה	אלהים
אדם	<i>man</i>	אנוש	אנו
דרך	<i>path</i>	ארה	אנסון
בוא	<i>to come</i>	אתה	אל
איש	<i>man</i>	גבר	גבר
היה	<i>to be</i>	היה	סו



		Poetic.	Cognate.
הָגִיד	to show	הָרָה	מָגַב
רָאָה	to see	הָרָה	מָגַב
הָבִיא	to bring	הוֹבִיל	אֹסֵב
דָּבָר	word	מָלָה	פָּלַח
מִלְחָמָה	war	קָרַב	סָבַח
יָרַד	to descend	נָחַת	נָסַח
עָבַר	to pass over	עָדָה	חָלַח
עָשָׂה	to do	פָּעַל	פָּעַל
עִיר	city	קָרְיָה	מִשְׁנָה
רָצַח	to kill	קָטַל	מָלָא

(See Gesenius, *Woerterbuch*, Vorrede, S. 47; and *Geschichte der Hebr. Sprache und Schrift*, S. 21 ff.)

It may be proper to add, that some of the poetic forms are occasionally found (though rarely) in prose; and that they most frequently occur in the lyric poetry.

"The *peculiar diction* of Hebrew poetry," says Professor Stuart, "is displayed in the *choice* of words; in the *meaning* assigned to them; and in the *forms* which it gives them.

(a) *The choice of words.* Thus אָנוּשׁ instead of אָדָם, *man*; אָתָה instead of בּוֹא, *to come*; מָלָה instead of דָּבָר, *word*; קָדָם instead of עוֹלָם, *former time*; תָּהוֹם instead of מַיִם, *water*.

(b) *The meaning of words.* E. g. אָבִיר *strong* for *God*; אָבִיר *strong*, for *bull*; יְהִידָה the *only*, the *darling*, for *life*; יוֹסֵף *Joseph*, for the *nation of Israel*, etc.

(c) *The forms of words.* E. g. אֱלֹהִים instead of אֱלֹהִים, *God*; הָיָה instead of הָיָה, *to be*; עַמִּים instead of עַמִּים, *nations*; שָׁנִים instead of שָׁנִים, *years*; יָמִים instead of יָמִים, *days*; מִן instead of מִן, *from*; יֵלֵךְ instead of יֵלֵךְ, *he will go*.

(d) In poetry, *several grammatical forms are peculiar.* E. g. paragogic הָ is suffixed to nouns in the absolute state; הִי and הִי are suffixed to nouns in regimen; מִי suffix is used instead of הֵם, *them, their*; הִי and הִי instead of הִי *his*; הִי fem. instead of הִי *thine*; הִי and הִי plur. instead of הִי."



Dr. Lowth intimates that these peculiarities of diction were adopted by the Hebrew poets, as by the poets of other nations, that they might conform their sentences to the laws of versification. This may be true; but the supposition does not appear necessary to account for the fact. The trammels of versification are never the only cause of the peculiarities of poetic diction. They are oftener chosen for the sake of ornament or harmony; to give an air of antiquity and grandeur to the style, which may distinguish it from the language of common life; and to enable the poet to give vent to his excited feelings, which he might labour in vain to express in the customary way. The poetry of the Hebrews is the poetry of a primitive and simple nation, a nation of shepherds; it is peculiarly the poetry of lofty conceptions and excited feelings, which could scarcely be confined by the trammels of verse; and to attribute to it a regular system of versification, seems to be attributing to it that which is incompatible with its nature, and an invention of much later times. Is it likely that the most ancient people in the world, whose minds were in a state of childlike excitement, would think of counting syllables and measuring lines, while struggling to express the simple feelings of their hearts? The regular return of the same measure seems to have been first introduced in order to adapt poetry to music; but in ancient times the poet and the musician were the same; the author of the song was the composer of the music which accompanied it; and each piece having its appropriate harmony, there was no necessity for that regular return of the same measure, which is indispensable where different words are to be sung to the same tune. Hence, in all nations, there is poetry and song long before there is a regular system of versification; and the minstrel always precedes the versifier and the musician.

It is beyond all doubt that there was a certain rhythmical conformation of sentences in the Hebrew poetry, (and sometimes, indeed, something like rhyme may be discovered, as in Samson's riddle, *Judg.* 14: 14.); but this was free and unfettered, the offspring of nature, not of art, and consisting principally of a parallelism of sentiment, or thought; of which no author has treated more satisfactorily than Lowth, (see *Lect.* XVIII—XX). It is true that there is regular versification in Arabic, the sister dialect of the Hebrew; but this is evidently of comparatively recent origin. Sir William Jones, indeed, pronounces it very ancient (*Comment.* p. 60); but he himself allows that the first Arabic writer on the subject of verse is

Ferahid, who lived in the tenth century of the Christian era. Does it seem probable, then, that the art could have existed long before the time of Christ? Pococke (*Spec. Hist. Arab.* p. 160) affirms, on the authority of two Arabic writers, Alsephad and Jalaloddin, that the art was recent among them: and this opinion is confirmed by the fact that the Arabic prosody depends on the *nunation*, or doubling of the final syllable; an invention of no very ancient date. (See Eichhorn on Jones's Comment. p. 61. Note).

It does seem, that if there had been a regular system of versification among the ancient Hebrews, some traces of it would still be perceptible; but it has hitherto eluded all the attempts of the most able and zealous inquirers to detect it. Some of the Rabbins and Christian fathers have maintained that the Hebrew poetry possesses all the variety and regularity of metre exhibited by the Greek; but they have offered no proof, and their usual mode of investigating and pronouncing on such subjects affords us but little security for the correctness of their decision. The most recent and able writers on the subject are Greve, Sir William Jones, Anton, and Bellerman. The two former make the metre depend on the *quantity* or *syllabic measure*, after the analogy of the Arabic and Greek; while the latter rest it on the *accents*, assuming the tone-syllable to be always long, and the others short. The last is the most plausible theory, as the train of accents is undoubtedly more ancient than the Masoretic punctuation. (See E. J. Greve, *Ultima Capita Libri Jobi*, etc. Davent. 1788-91, P. I. II. Sir William Jones, Comment. pp. 55-59. C. G. Anton, *Conjectura de Metro Hebraeorum*, etc. Lips. 1770. 4to. Bellerman, *Versuch ueber die Metrik der Hebraeer*, etc. Berlin, 1813, 8vo). The opinion which I have adopted, is on the whole favoured by Lowth; and it is strongly defended by Michaelis, Herder, and De Wette. (Michaelis and Rosenmueller in loc.; Herder, *Briefe*, Th. I. SS. 150-51, and *Geist*, Th. I. SS. 18-25; De Wette, *Commentar ueber die Ps. Einleit.* SS 46-67).  
S.

[B. p. 34.] *Hebrew pronunciation and quantity.*

That it is impossible now to ascertain the real quantity of Hebrew syllables and the true rhythm of Hebrew poetry, is sufficiently proved by the very unsatisfactory and inconsistent results to which all learned men have come, who have attempted to investigate the subject. I am inclined to think, however, that Lowth is too severe



in his remarks on the Masoretic punctuation. The Hebrew ceased to be a living language sometime during the captivity (Neh. 8: 7, 8), perhaps 500 B. C.; but as the book of the law was constantly read to the people by the priests in the original, it is highly probable that the ancient pronunciation was preserved, with a good degree of purity, in the sacerdotal class. This supposition is confirmed when we consider the high veneration of the Jews for every thing connected with their law; their strong attachment to its most minute details; and the hatred and contempt with which they were viewed by other nations, which tended only to unite them more firmly among themselves, and increase their love for every thing which they could call their own. Though the present system of vowel-points was not completed till about the eighth century of the Christian era, it was commenced much earlier. In very ancient times, while the traditionary pronunciation was still fresh in the recollection of the learned Jews, manuscripts were probably written with the vowel-points annexed only to the more doubtful words; as is the case at the present day with Arabic manuscripts written for common use. The Alexandrian translators, who flourished at least three centuries before Christ, in many cases agree with the present Masoretic punctuation in their mode of spelling proper names, though they frequently depart from it, and are by no means uniform or consistent with themselves; an appearance which seems to indicate that they used manuscripts generally without vowels, but pointed in some places like those which exist at the present day. A similar appearance is exhibited in the Hexapla of Origen, where the Hebrew words of the Old Testament are represented by Greek characters; and the testimony of Jerome to the same point is quite explicit. On Habakkuk 3: 5, he remarks: "Pro eo quod nos transtulimus *mortem*, in Hebraeo tres litterae sunt positae דבר absque ulla vocali; quae si legantur *dabar verbum* significant, si *deber, pestem*." On the other hand he asserts respecting Gen. 47: 31, that his manuscript read מטה, *bed*, and not מטה, *staff*; a distinction which could be made only by vowel-points of some kind. "Hoc loco quidam frustra simulant, adorasse Jacob summitatem *sceptri* Joseph, quod videlicet honorans filium potestatem ejus adoraverit, cum in Hebraeo multum aliter legatur: et adoravit Israel ad caput *lectuli*." (See also Jerome in Jer. 9: 22; Epist. ad Evagr. 120; Quaest. in Gen. 26: 12. 36: 24).

The peculiarity of the Masoretic punctuation is an evidence of its genuineness. It is quite different from the vowel-system of the



cognate dialects; but had it been a mere invention of the Rabbins, it would probably have borne a nearer resemblance to the Arabic, as they were in the habit of appealing to the Arabic in explanation of the Hebrew. Again, the Masoretic punctuation enters so radically into the whole grammatical structure of the language, that I find it impossible to suppose it to be a mere arbitrary invention, originating in the conceit of the Jewish scholars of a barbarous age.

The true pronunciation was probably preserved from the first in the schools of the priests; and to prevent its being lost, the scrupulous Jews devised one expedient after another, to represent as accurately as possible the minutest varieties of sound, till they brought their punctuation to its present state, in which it exhibits the most curious, nicely-adjusted, and complete vowel-system to be found in any language. So far from being unmusical and harsh, as Dr. Lowth affirms, I hardly know a language more smooth, harmonious, and flowing, than the Hebrew with the Masoretic pronunciation. I am far from supposing that we pronounce the language as the ancient Hebrews did; but I believe we approach it as nearly as we do the pronunciation of the ancient Greeks and Romans; and, indeed, as the vowel-system is much more complete and perfect, we probably come much nearer to the true Hebrew pronunciation than to the Greek or Latin. (See Michaelis in loc.; Bellerman, Versuch, s. x f.; De Wette, Comment. Einleit. S. 57 ff.; Eichhorn, Einleitung, Band I. S. 224 ff.; Gesenius, Vorrede zum Woerterbuch, and Geschichte der Hebr. Sprache und Schrift, SS. 48—56.) S.

[C. p. 35.] *Meaning of מְזַמֵּר.*

מְזַמֵּר, *he cut off, he pruned*, namely, the superfluous and luxuriant branches of trees. Hence מְזַמְרָה, a *branch, or twig*; מְזַמְרָה, a *pruning-hook*. Also *he sung, or chanted*; *he cut his voice* by the notes in singing, or divided it. שִׁיר signifies singing with the voice (vocal music): נָזַן to play upon an instrument. זֶמֶר implies either vocal or instrumental melody. Thus בְּזִמְרֵי שִׁיר מְזַמֵּר (see Ps. lxvii. 1) I think means a *metrical song, accompanied with music*. Thus I suppose מְזַמֵּר to denote *measure*, or numbers, what the Greeks called *μετρον*. It may also be more immediately referred to the former and original sense of the root, as signifying, a poem *cut into short sentences*, and *pruned* from every luxuriance of expression, which is a distinguishing characteristic of the Hebrew poetry. Prose composition is called שְׁלִיחָה, loose or free, diffused with

no respect to rule; like a wild tree, luxuriant on every side in its leaves and branches: Metrical language is *זְמַרָה*, *cut* and *pruned* on every side into sentences, like branches, distributed into a certain form and order; as vines, which the vine-dresser corrects with his pruning knife, and adjusts into form. LOWTH.

The correctness of this etymology is questioned by Michaelis, Gesenius, and De Wette; but they propose no better one to supply its place. S.

[D. p. 35.] *Coincidence of verses and sentences.*

That the nature of Hebrew poetry requires every verse to contain a complete sentiment, is put beyond doubt by the alphabetic poems.

[E. p. 36.] *Hebrew and Arabic poetry.*

This remarkable characteristic of Hebrew poetry is very happily illustrated by an author already quoted (Lect. II. Note B), in a comparison between the Hebrew and Arabic poetry.

“Arabica poësis instar est foeminae fuco illitae et monilibus onustae, in cuius cultu plurima quidem splendent, adeo ut formae naturali noceant, sed non omnia aequae sunt pretiosa, imo, ubi diligentius exploraveris, pleraque vel adulterina, vel ab aliis mutuo sumpta, quod in ipsa luxurie paupertatem quandam arguit. Hebraea vero, tanquam coelestis quaedam Musa, in veste gemmis stellata incedit. Hinc explicandum est, quod non dubito, quin omnes observaveritis, quotquot unquam poema aliquod Arabicum latine redditum legistis, quodque Hebraeorum vatum praestantiam demonstrat, videlicet, Arabum carmina in alium sermonem conversa nunquam posse placere, nisi forte versio sit metrica, vel talis, in qua quidquid in ipso carmine obscuri vel inepti insit, praetereatur aut emendetur. Hebraeorum vero poësis ita pulchra est, ut ne in languidissimis quidem versionibus omnis eius maiestas et venustas evanescat, et tamen optimae versiones, etiam metricae, ad germanam eius pulcritudinem non nisi ex intervallo accedant.” RAVIUS.



## NOTES ON LECTURE IV.

[A. p. 38.] *Meaning of לָשׁוֹן and מִשְׁלָּה.*

לָשׁוֹן, he likened, he compared, he spoke in parables; he uttered proverbs, sentences grave and pointed, a composition ornamented with figures and comparisons; also he ruled, he was eminent, he possessed dominion and authority; delegated, perhaps, and vicarious in its original and restricted sense, whence at last it was taken more laxly, as referring to any kind of dominion. The elder servant of Abraham, who presided over his family, was certainly called לְ-רִשְׁוֹן-לְ-בָרְךָ לָשׁוֹן, Gen. xxiv. 2. He was in fact a steward in the place of his master, and representing him by a delegated authority; whence there is evidently a relation between the two interpretations of this root, consisting in this circumstance, that both the parabolical image, and the steward or deputy, are representative. לָשׁוֹן is therefore a composition elevated and grave, weighty and powerful, highly ornamented with comparisons, figures, and imagery; such is the style of the Psalms, the prophets, and the book of Job. It is a diction, which under one image or exemplar includes many, and may easily be transferred to every one of the same kind; which is in general the nature of proverbs: it is in fine, any sentence or axiom excellently or gravely uttered, concise, and confined to a certain form or manner: as is evident from 1 Sam. xxiv. 14, and from many examples in the Proverbs of Solomon. LOWTH.

In Hebrew the verb לָשׁוֹן has two principal meanings. 1) *to rule*; 2) *to compare*. From the second are derived the collateral meanings: *to make a comparison*, or *speak a parable*; *to utter a proverb*; *to speak in figurative language*; and hence the word came to denote the use of *highly ornamented and poetic diction of every sort*. According to Gesenius (in verb.), these different significations appear to be derived from the primitive meaning, *to place*; in Arabic مَثَلٌ and مَثَلٌ, *to place one's self before another, to do him homage*; hence, 1) causative, *to make one render obedience*; 2) *to place opposite*; and thence, *to compare, to resemble, to make a comparison*.

In this manner the Hebrew noun לָשׁוֹן and the Arabic مَثَلٌ came to signify a *resemblance*, a *comparison*; a *parable*; a *proverb*; *figurative language* in general; and therefore, a *song*, or *poem*. In



the Bible it sometimes appears to have a restricted meaning, and is used to denote didactic poetry (see Lect. XXIV.) in distinction from poetry more highly ornamented (שִׁיר), as 1 Kings 5: 12. Prov. 1: 1. But generally, all sorts of poems, whether prophetic, triumphal, elegiac, or satirical, are called מְשֻׁלֵּם, on account of their figurative style. Compare Num. 21: 27. xxiii. xxiv. Ps. 49: 5. Isa. 14: 4. Heb. 2: 6. The same latitude of signification is found in the Syriac מְשֻׁלֵּם and the Chaldee מְשֻׁלֵּם. In Arabic the word <sup>5</sup>أَمْثَال denotes *verses*.

The word חֵידָה (in Arabic <sup>5</sup>حَبْد, a *comparison* or *allegory*) from the verb חָדַד (in Arabic <sup>5</sup>حَانَ, to *bend*, to *leave the direct way*), properly signifies *an intricate or complicated sentence*, something which requires ingenuity and acuteness to solve; *an enigma, or riddle*. The word is applied to pointed and striking proverbs, the language of which is purposely rendered somewhat ambiguous and intricate, in order to arrest and fix the attention, (Prov. 1:6); to visions, or the more obscure intimations of the divine will, (Num. 12: 8); to the more intricate sort of parables, (Ezek. 17: 2); and to the more solemn and elevated kinds of poetry. (Ps. 49: 5. 78: 2. Compare Hab. 2: 6).

The proposing of enigmas for the mutual trial of skill, on occasions of visits and festivals, was a very favourite amusement among the Orientals, nor was it unknown to the ancient Latins, (Aul. Gell. Noct. Att. Lib. XII. 2. 6. Compare Lib. XVIII. 2. 111). Samson, on his marriage festival, knew no more acceptable mode of amusing his guests than by propounding to them a riddle, which he gave out in verse, and with *chime* at least, if not in *rhyme*; and of which they gave a solution in the same style, (Judg. 14: 14, 18. Compare Herder, Geist, Th. II. S. 265). The Queen of Sheba seems to have made a like trial of Solomon's wisdom (1 Kings 10: 1); and the sharp contests of this sort between that wise king and Hiram king of Tyre, are much celebrated by Josephus, (Antiq. VIII. 5: 4). Similar amusements among the Ethiopians, Egyptians, and Greeks, are described by Jablonsky (Pantheon Aegypt. Proleg. Sec. 48); and reference to the same custom is made by Mohammed in the Coran (xxv. 35).

Enigmas of some sort are very frequent in the Oriental didactic poetry, (as Prov. xxx. xxxi. Compare Herder, Briefe, Th. I. S. 167

ff. and Geist, Th. II. S. 266 ff.); and something of very much the same character is sometimes found in the highest and most sublime prophetic poetry. A remarkable example occurs in Isa. xxi. 11, 12, which is thus explained by Rosenmueller :

“Quod loco Iesaiano a Michaele commemorato, XXI. 12, legitur, aenigma recte propheticum dici potest. Inducuntur Idumaei tempore communis alicuius cum populo Hebraico calamitatis, quærentes ex vate qui custodis sive vigilis persona sistitur, quamdiu tempestas ista calamitosa, noctis imagine expressa, sit duratura :

אֲדָרָא מִשֵּׁיר

שִׁיר מִהֶמְלִיכָה

שִׁיר מִהֶמְלִיכָה :

Ad me clamatur ex Seire :

Custos, quid de nocte ?

Custos, quid de nocte ?

Perunt responsum :

אָחָא בֶקֶר יָגֵם לְיָלִיכָה

Venit matutinum, etiamque nox.

Cuius aenigmatis sensum optime exponit HIERONYMUS : Venit mane populo meo, et nox genti Idumaeorum : illis praebebo lucem, vos in tenebris derelinquam.” (Compare Michaelis and Rosenmueller in loc.) S.

[B. p. 39.] *Union of poetry, music, and dancing among the ancients.*

In the infancy of all nations, poetry, music, and dancing are intimately connected, and it is very seldom that any one of these arts is exercised separately from the others. Such a separation requires an advanced, and considerably refined, state of society. Among all wild people these are the natural expressions of joy ; and in all their festivals we find that their songs were accompanied with music and dancing. For example, Miriam at the Red Sea, (Ex. 15: 20) ; Jephtha's daughter, (Judg. 11: 34) ; the Israelitish women who celebrated David's victory, (1 Sam. 21: 11). The religious worship of the Hebrews was celebrated with dances ; and the practice was continued among them to a very late period. (2 Sam. 6: 14. Ps. 149: 3. 150: 4. Jer. 31: 4, 13. Lam. 5: 15. Compare Herder, Geist, Th. II. S. 244 ff.) S.

[C. p. 39.] *Poets anciently denominated sages and prophets.*

As poets were the first moral instructors of mankind, it was very common in ancient times to denominate them *wise men or sages* ;



and that too after they had ceased to be moral instructors. Compare the following quotation from the son of Sirach and Anacreon.

Σοφοὶ λόγοι ἐν παιδείᾳ ἀντῶν,

Ἐκζητοῦντες μέλη μουσικῶν,

Διηγούμενοι ἔπη ἐν γραφῇ. Ecclus. xlv. 4.

Ῥοδόχρους δὲ κ' Ἀφροδίτα

Παρά τῶν Σοφῶν καλεῖται. Anacreon, L. I. 22.

Compare Pindar, Isth. V. 36, and Scholiast in loc.

Μελέταν δὲ Σοφισταῖς

Διὸς ἕκατι πρόσβαλλον σεβιζόμενοι.

On which the Scholiast observes : σοφιστὰς μὲν καὶ σοφὸν ἐλεγον τοὺς ποιητάς. "Poetae et priores multo fuerunt, (philosophis) et ante natum philosophiae nomen pro sapientibus habebantur." Lactantius, Lib. V. 5. Heman and Ethan, the sons of Mahol, whose wisdom is so much celebrated; (1 Kings 4: 81, compare 1 Chron. 2: 6), were poets, if we may judge from the titles of Ps. LXXXVIII. LXXXIX. As poetry was supposed to be the effect of divine inspiration (see Lect. II. Note B), poets were very generally denominated prophets. So Miriam and Deborah are both called prophetesses (Ex. 15: 20. Judg. 4: 4). So the psalmists appointed by David are said to *prophesy with the harp, with psalteries*, etc. (1 Chron. 25: 1—7). (Lowth and Michaelis in loc. Compare Herder, Geist, Th. II. S. 61; Eichhorn, Einleitung, Band V. SS. 23, 24). S.

[D. p. 40.] *Ancient uses of poetry.*

In this Note I have inserted the quotations from ancient authors, which Lowth has adduced in illustration of his position, and the remarks of Michaelis and Gregory on the same subject. S.

This matter is well explained by Isidorus, however rashly some learned men may have taken it. "It is well known," says he, "that among the Greeks, as well as among the Latins, metrical composition was much more ancient than prose. Every species of knowledge was at first contained in poetry: it was long before prose composition flourished. The first man among the Greeks, who composed in prose, was Pherecydes Syrius; among the Romans, Appius Cæcus first published a work in prose against Pyrrhus." ISIDOR. HISPAL. Orig. Lib. 1. 27.

"The laws of Charondas were sung at banquets among the Athenians, as Hermippus relates." Athen. Lib. XIV. 3. See Bentley's Dissertations on Phalaris, p. 373.



"Why are laws called canticles? but that before alphabetical writing was invented, the laws used to be sung, that they might be preserved in remembrance? as is the custom still among the Agathyrsi," Prob. S. 19. Q. 28.

LOWTH.

Possibly laws, which are in the sententious style, were originally precepts of equity and morals, and in course of time acquired authority in the courts of justice. There is much of this proverbial style in the ancient German laws: and I am assured by good authority, in those of Sweden also. Moses himself is so sententious and compact, and pays so much attention to brevity in many of his laws, that he seems to have adopted into his code some well-known proverbs, containing the general principles of equity; of this I think there is an instance in Exod. xxiii. 5, in which there is a point and antithesis, more resembling the familiarity of a proverb than the dignity of a statute. To the example of the Lusitanians, we may add one more recent of the Swedes, who in the year 1748 published laws in verse.

After the extraordinary revolutions of Germany, and the dispersion of that people into different colonies, it is not surprising that no monuments of the poetical records of our ancestors should remain. Scandinavia and Iceland have been more fortunate in this respect; there the records of their most ancient transactions are traditionally preserved to this day. These instances of a practice so agreeable to that of the Hebrews, existing among a people so remote, serve to prove the great similarity in the human mind throughout all the countries of the globe, and show that the most natural and early mode of preserving facts, has been by verses committed to memory, rather than by written documents. What Pococke relates of the Arabs, applies perhaps more directly to the present subject. "It seems," he says, "to be entirely owing to their poetry, that so copious a language is preserved in a perfect state. Among other commendations of their poetry, they enumerate this, that both the purity of the Arabic language, and the propriety and elegance of their pronunciation, have owed their preservation entirely to it. Ebn Phares observes, that the Arabic poems serve in the place of commentaries, or annals, in which are recorded the series of their genealogies, and all the facts of history deserving of remembrance, and from which a knowledge of the language is to be collected."

MICHAELIS.

However the antiquity of Ossian's poems, as exhibited to the public, may be doubted, it is certain that there exists in the Highlands

of Scotland many remains of the ancient historical ballads, which, though in all probability of a much later date than the age of Ossian is pretended to be, contain many marks of wild genius, and I am informed from good authority, furnished Mr. Macpherson with the bulk of his materials.

GREGORY.

To these testimonies concerning the early use of poetry, I will add a remarkable passage of Plutarch, which states summarily many facts relating to this circumstance. "The use of reason seems to resemble the exchange of money: that which is good and lawful, is generally current and well known, and passes sometimes at a higher and sometimes at a lower value. Thus, there was a time when the stamp and coin of all reasoning or composition was verse and song. Even history, philosophy, every action and passion, which required grave or serious discussion, was written in poetry and adapted to music. For what at present few will attend to, was then by all men thought an object of importance: *by ploughmen and by bird-catchers*, according to PINDAR. For such was the inclination for poetry at that period, that they adapted their very precepts and instructions to vocal and instrumental music, and exhorted, reproved, and persuaded by fables or allegories. The praises also of their gods, their prayers, and thanksgivings after victory, were all composed in verse; some through the love of harmony, and some through custom. It is not therefore that Apollo envies the science of divination this ornament, nor did he design to banish from the Tripos his beloved muse; he rather wished to introduce her as one who loved harmony and excited to it; as one who was ready to assist the fancy and conception, and to help to produce what was noble and sublime, as most becoming and most to be admired." PLUT. *Inquiry why the Pythia now ceases to deliver her oracles in verse.*

LOWTH.

See this subject treated at large, *Essays historical and moral* by G. GREGORY, Essay I. *On the progress of manners*, p. 31, 37, 39, 40, 43.

GREGORY.

We may add, that poetry is much less liable to be corrupted than prose. So faithful a preserver of truth is metre, that what is liable to be changed, augmented, or violated, almost daily in prose, may continue for ages in verse, without variation, without even a change in the obsolete phraseology.

MICHAELIS.



[E. p. 42.] *Twofold meaning of* חֲשֻׁנִּים.

In Numbers 21: 27, the Seventy translate חֲשֻׁנִּים by *αἰνιγματιστάι*. Compare Jer. 48: 45, 46.

"Who these *enigmatists* are (says Augustin) is not very plain, since there is no such appellation in our language (Latin); nor indeed is the word elsewhere found in the Holy Scriptures (that is, in the Septuagint); but since they seem to have been employed in singing a poem, in which was celebrated a war that had been carried on between the Amorites and the Moabites, in which Seor, king of the Amorites, was victorious, it is not improbable that these enigmatists may have been those whom we now call poets; inasmuch as it is customary with poets to mingle enigmas and fables in their verses, by which they obscurely indicate realities: for an enigma is no other than a figurative mode of expression, upon the explanation of which depends our understanding the author." *Quæst. xlv. in Num.*

LOWTH.

This matter will appear clearer and more easy of conception, if the distinction be rightly observed between the two different significations of the word חֲשֻׁנִּים: the one more comprehensive, and including all kinds of poetry, on account of the figurative language; the other peculiar to a certain kind of poetry, which is opposed to the canticle or song. Our author, in the following page, seems to apprehend rightly of the word in this double sense; but I thus far differ from him, that I think it is not expressive of two particular species of poetry, but in the one sense it means the whole genus, and in the other the particular species, which I just now pointed out. The Seventy have rendered this word very ill *αἰνιγματιστάς*; חֲשֻׁנִּים, or *similitude*, may indeed sometimes denote an enigma; and if Augustin has mistaken the meaning of the Septuagint, it is excusable, since, whatever might be his ability in other respects, a profound knowledge of Hebrew was certainly not among his excellencies.

MICHAELIS.

[F. p. 42.] *Ancient historical poems.*

In the time of Moses, the Hebrew had reached its highest point of refinement, and his age is often and justly styled the *golden age* of the language. That it should have attained so much copiousness and beauty without having been employed as a *written language* previous to that time, is altogether improbable, not to say impossible.



The Oriental nations, by a tradition almost universal among them, attribute the invention of letters to Seth, the son of Adam. (Compare Eichhorn, *Einleitung*, Band III. S. 8).

Between Moses and Abraham, the founder of the Hebrew nation, there is an interval of about 550 years; and about 2500 between him and the earliest of the events which he records. That all the circumstances which he relates, the genealogy and history of so many different families, the particular accounts of individuals, the various conversations which he details, should have been preserved without the use of writing, is, humanly speaking, impossible; and Moses nowhere intimates that he received a knowledge of all the facts contained in his history by immediate revelation from God: on the contrary, he once at least introduces as authority a direct quotation from a book extant at the time when he wrote. (Num. 21: 14).

That the Hebrews, then, had books in their own language before the time of Moses, may be considered certain; and that he made use of them in composing his history, scarcely admits of doubt. The first eleven chapters of Genesis particularly (which bring the history down to the time of Abraham), appear to be a selection or compilation from very ancient records; and no finished Hebrew scholar can avoid feeling a very striking diversity of style in these chapters, and a departure in almost all of them from the usual style of Moses. For the sake of trial, let the student compare Gen. 1: 1—2: 3, with Gen. 2: 4—25; and both of these with some of the acknowledged compositions of Moses, for example, the third chapter of Exodus. These primeval records of God's dealings with mankind in the infancy of our race, from which Moses, under divine direction, compiled his history, may not improperly be viewed as the *Bible of the patriarchs*. After the history of Abraham commences (C. xii.), the narrative proceeds uniformly and regularly, as if from the pen of one writer, with the exception perhaps of the history of Esau's family (C. xxxvi.), of the posterity of Judah (C. xxxviii.), and a few verses of some of the other chapters; all which are apparently literal selections from the records of the several tribes to which they refer. (See Herder, *Briefe*, Th. I. S. 39 ff; Eichhorn, *Einleitung*, Band III. S. 18 ff).

But whatever may be thought of the existence of such a patriarchal Bible as I have supposed, one thing at least is certain, namely, that there were several historical poems in existence long

before the time of Moses, which he has transmitted to us, apparently in the very words in which they were originally composed. Of these, the most ancient is the address of Lamech, (Gen. 4: 23, 24). The historian having mentioned Lamech, of the seed of Cain, the father of Jubal, the first who applied himself to husbandry and pasturage; of Jubal, the inventor of musical instruments; and of Tubal-Cain, who first discovered the art of working metals; introduces this address, as much as to say, "This is the Lamech by whom, (or concerning whom), this well-known traditional song was composed." It may be that we have only the first lines of the song, and that if the whole were preserved, the occasion of it would have been more apparent than it now is. As it stands, the most obvious explanation seems to be, that Lamech had killed a man who assaulted him; and to quiet the apprehensions of his wives, who entertained fears for his safety, he alleges that what he had done was done in self-defence; and that if Cain his ancestor, who had committed an unprovoked and aggravated murder, was to be avenged seven times on any one who would take his life, surely he, who had acted only on the defensive, would be avenged seventy and seven times.

The explanation of Herder is quite a different one, but so ingenious, that I think it deserves an insertion in this place. He supposes that the haughty and revengeful Lamech, overjoyed by the invention of metallic weapons by his son Tubal-Cain, breaks out in this triumphal song, boasting, that if Cain, by the providence of God, was to be avenged seven times, he, by means of the newly invented weapons, so much superior to any thing of the kind known at that time, would be able to take much heavier vengeance on those who injured him. (Herder, Geist, Th. I. S. 309).

The following are the remarks of Michaelis:

"The Jews have indulged great liberty of fiction and conjecture concerning this passage, which has answered no other purpose than to render it more perplexed to others also, who were unable to digest their whimsical and absurd explications. To me there is very little obscurity in the original; for though we are necessarily ignorant of the name of the person who was murdered, I think it is sufficiently plain that some person was murdered by Lamech. I say *person*; for what the Jews have feigned concerning the death of two persons, the one a youth, and the other a man, proceeds entirely from their ignorance of the nature of the Hebrew poetry, and particularly of the parallelism or repetition of certain members of the



sentences, which our author has explained in a very masterly manner in the 19th Lecture. Nor is there any more reason to distinguish between the youth and the man, than to suppose Hadah and Sillah other than the wives of Lamech, who are mentioned in the next line :

“ Hadah and Sillah hear my voice,

“ Ye wives of Lamech attend, etc.”

The truth is, Lamech had committed a murder : he repents of the fact, but hopes, after the example of Cain, to escape with impunity, and with that hope he cheers his wives, who are anxious for his fate. It is not to be supposed that he addressed them in verse ; the substance of what he said has been reduced to numbers for the sake of preserving it easily in the memory. This poem therefore constitutes a part of history known to the Israelites : and Moses intimates to what Lamech it relates, namely, not to the son of Seth, the father of Noah, but to this Lamech of the seed of Cain : what he adds is to this effect : “ This Lamech, who was of the seed of Cain, is the same who complained to his wives in those well-known traditional verses, etc.”

“ That Moses has preserved many relics of this kind, is evident from the fragments of verse which are scattered throughout his writings, and which are very distinguishable from his usual language.”

The only difficulty attending the explanation of this song arises from the use of the suffix pronoun ך, and the preposition ב. That the suffix pronouns are taken *passively* as well as *actively* is plain from Jer. 51 : 35. Ex. 20 : 20. Isa. 56 : 7, 21 : 2. Ps. 56 : 13. etc. (See Stuart's Heb. Gram. § 472, 3d edit.) ; and that the preposition ב often means *on account of*, *propter*, is evident from Lev. 19 : 28. Num. 6 : 7. Isa. 14 : 9. 15 : 5. 30 : 1. 36 : 9. 60 : 9. etc.

The poetical piece which next occurs, is the address of Noah respecting his sons (Gen. 9 : 25—27), the meaning of which is sufficiently obvious. We next find the blessing of Isaac on his sons (Gen. 27 : 27—29, 39, 40) ; and then the most sublime and elegant of all the remains of primeval poetry, the blessing of Jacob, (Gen. xlix.). We cannot stop here to go into an examination of this most interesting relic of antiquity ; which, as it stands in the English translation, is quite unintelligible. It may be sufficient to remark, that the old Nomadic patriarch gives a hasty but striking sketch of the character of each of his sons, generally by reference to the well-known qualities of some animal with which he compares them ; as-



signs them their location in the promised land; and prophetically glances at the condition of their descendants. These blessings, in fact, in the patriarchal times, were equivalent to a will. The words of Jacob were constantly in the mind of Moses, when he pronounced his blessing on the tribes of Israel (Deut. xxxiii.); and the two pieces ought to be studied in connexion. (Compare Herder, *Briefe*, Th. I. S. 64 ff; Geist, Th. II. S. 179 ff).

In Num. 21: 14, 15, there is a quotation from a triumphal song of the Hebrews; vs. 17, 18, the first stanzas of a song which the Hebrews sung at the digging of a well; and 27—30, the triumphal song of the Hebrews for their victory over the Amorites; a large part of which is made up of a quotation from the triumphal song of the Amorites on occasion of their conquest of Moab. This Song is quoted by Jer. 48: 45, 46.

To complete the collection of historical poems from the books of Moses, add the song by the Red Sea (Ex. 15: 1—21); and the addresses of Balaam (Num. xxiv. xxv.). These last are in the highest style of prophetic inspiration, and they appear to be the very words pronounced by Balaam, or an exact translation of them from a kindred dialect. (See Lect. XX. p. 174). S.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE V.

[A. p. 46.] *Rhetorical figures.*

*Comparison* appears to be the first and most natural of all rhetorical figures. When at a loss to explain our meaning, we naturally apply to the associating principle to furnish an illustration: and this seems almost an involuntary act of the mind. A *Metaphor* is a comparison, without the words indicating resemblance. When a savage experienced a sensation, for which he had as yet no name, he applied that of the idea which most resembled it, in order to explain himself. Thus the words expressing the faculties of the mind are taken from sensible images, as *fancy* from *phantasma*; *idea* in the original language means an *image* or *picture*; and *way* has always been used to express the mode of attaining our *end* or *desire*.

There is, however, another reason for the use of metaphorical language: when the mind is agitated, the associations are more strongly felt, and the connected ideas will more readily present

themselves, than at another time. On this account a man in a passion will frequently reject the words which simply express his thoughts, and, for the sake of giving them more force, will make use of images stronger, more lively, and more congenial to the tone of his mind.

The principal advantage which the metaphor possesses over the simile or comparison, seems to consist in the former transporting the mind, and carrying it nearer to the reality than the latter; as when we say—"Achilles rushed like a lion," we have only the idea of a man going on furiously to battle; but when we say instead of Achilles—"The lion rushed on," the idea is more animated. There is also more of brevity in a style that abounds in metaphors, than in a style which consists more of comparisons; and therefore it proves a better vehicle for the sublime.

The rule which good writers seem to have adopted respecting the use of similes or metaphors is this: Where the resemblance is very strong and obvious, it may be expressed by a simple metaphor, and it will, in general, be expressed more forcibly; but where the resemblance is not so obvious, it requires to be more expanded, and then a comparison or simile will appear neither formal nor pompous.

There is another observation concerning the use of these figures, which is more common, though I do not think the reason of it is generally understood. Comparisons are unnatural in extremes of *passion*, though metaphors are not. The truth is, the mind when strongly agitated readily catches at slight associations, and metaphors therefore are instantaneously formed; but it is impossible that the mind should dwell upon them with the formality and exactness of a person making a comparison.

GREGORY.

No writers make so free a use of metaphor as the Hebrew, and no language is so favourable to this figure. Those ideas and objects which in other languages are expressed in abstract terms, in the Hebrew are made to act and speak and possess all the attributes of living beings. For an illustration of this remark, the Hebrew student has only to examine the use which is made of the words, *son*, *daughter*, *face*, etc. To give a few examples. A man eighty-six years old, is a *son of eighty-six years* (Gen. 16: 16); a man condemned to death, is a *son of death* (1 Sam. 20: 31); arrows are *sons of the bow*, or *of the quiver* (Job 41: 19. Lam. 3: 13); morning stars are *sons of the dawn* (Isa. 14: 12); the suburbs of a city are its *daughters* (Num. 21: 25. Judg. 11: 26. Josh. 15: 45); the pupil of



the eye is the *daughter of the eye* (Lam. 2: 18), sometimes the *little man of the eye* (Deut. 32: 10), on account of the image reflected from it; or more fully, *the little man, the daughter of the eye* (Ps. 17: 8), etc. These metaphors are constantly occurring, and form a constituent part of the language. As, *the ark walked on the face of the waters* (Gen. 7: 18); a hill with a rich soil is called *a horn, the son of oil* (Isa. 5: 1). Midnight is called *the little man of the night* (Prov. 7: 9); and thick darkness is styled *the little man of darkness*, (Prov. 20: 20); the figure being derived in both instances from the application of the word *יְלָדָא* (*little man*) to the pupil of the eye. The rim of a vessel, the border of a garment, the bank of a river, the shore of the sea, are all called *lip*, (1 Kings 7: 26. Ex. 28: 32. Gen. 22: 17. 41: 3). In the xxxviii. chapter of Job, the earth is a great palace, whose corner-stone was laid by God, on which occasion all the morning stars sang together (vs. 4—7); the ocean is a child, issuing from the womb of its mother earth, and clothed with clouds and swaddled with thick darkness (vs. 8, 9); the dawn is an intelligent agent, awaiting the command of its Creator (vs. 12, 13); the lightnings listen to the voice of their Sovereign, appear before him at his call, and announce their presence (v. 35). A like boldness in the use of metaphor is found in other Oriental writers. Mohammed calls wine *the mother of sins*; and a Persian poet speaking of the mingling of water and wine for a feast, says, *the son of the clouds marries the daughter of the vine*. (Compare Herder, Geist, Th. I. S. 96. Th. II. S. 10; Sir William Jones, Comment. p. 120). S.

[B. p. 50.] *Sources of poetic imagery.*

To the four sources of poetic imagery mentioned by our author, may be added a fifth, namely, Poetic Fable, of which see more, Lect. IX. Note F. S.

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#### NOTES ON LECTURE VI.

[A. p. 52.] *Boldness of oriental imagery.*

Boldness and luxuriance of imagery is one of the most striking traits of Oriental poetry. In the East, the beauty of the climate, the richness of the soil, the abundance of vegetation, laid open many



sources of imagery to which we are strangers: and when any one point of resemblance presented itself to the glowing imagination of an Oriental poet, he seized it with avidity, without any regard to the dissimilarity of the objects in other respects. The beauty of some of the boldest of these comparisons may be felt by us; though others appear, to our colder imaginations, rather harsh. For example, when a beautiful virgin is compared to an *enclosed garden* and a *fountain sealed up* (Sol. Song 4: 12), we are at no loss to perceive the appropriateness and the exquisite beauty of the image: but when a lady's hair is compared to a *flock of goats*, and her teeth to a *flock of newly washed sheep*, (Song 6: 5, 6); her neck to a *tower of ivory*, her eyes to *the fountains of Heshbon*, and her nose to *the tower of Lebanon*, (Song 7: 4); the effect on our feelings is not the same as that produced on the feelings of an Oriental. Imagery of this sort is not confined to Solomon's Song: it is still in use, and indeed carried much further by the Oriental poets of the present day. An Arabic poet, describing the beauties of a female, says:

- " Her eyebrows are like bows, shooting deadly arrows;
- " Her nose like the point of a sword;
- " Her mouth like the signet of Solomon;
- " Her cheeks like the anemone (wind-flower);
- " Her two lips are two opals;
- " Her teeth are pearls set in coral;
- " She has a forehead like the new moon,
- " And lips sweeter than the honey-comb, and cooler than pure water;
- " Her neck is like the bamboo of India;
- " Her bosom like a swelling fountain;
- " Her breasts like pomegranates;
- " Her belly like silk, having fold on fold;
- " Her navel is anointed with ointment of myrrh."

(See Sir William Jones, Comment. p. 140).

With this description compare Sol. Song vii.

In judging of figures of this sort, we should remember that they are not used for illustration merely, but also for ornament and for amplification; and if the comparison does not always make the subject clearer, the end of the poet is attained, if it give beauty or fullness to the description. Homer, in some of his comparisons, exhibits all the freedom of an Oriental; for example, (Odys. V. towards the close), where he compares Ulysses sleeping, covered with leaves, to a coal of fire buried in the ashes.

In every nation the language of common life abounds in metaphorical expressions, which are used so frequently and so exclusive-

ly in their figurative sense, that they lose their metaphorical appearance, and when they occur, the *acquired* meaning of the words only is suggested, and their *original* literal signification is disregarded. Thus, from the *veins* of the animal body, we speak of a *vein of ore* in the earth; and thence, of a *vein of humour*, a *vein of poetry*, etc.; and these expressions have now become so familiar, that we no longer regard them as metaphors. Metaphorical phrases of this sort, in different climates and among different people, are derived from different objects. Thus, what we call the *eye of a needle*, the Germans call its *ear*; what we denominate an *arm of the sea*, the Hebrews, Arabians, and other Orientals, denominate a *tongue of the sea* (Josh. 15: 2, 5. 18: 19. Is. 11: 15). What in one language is usually expressed *literally*, in another is usually expressed by a metaphor; for example, we speak of a *flame of fire*, but the Hebrews of a *tongue of fire*, (Is. 5: 24. comp. Acts 2: 3. and Virg. Aen. II. 684).

The language of poetry is influenced by the language of common life, and the metaphors in popular use are frequently by poets extended, applied to different subjects, and couched in expressions more bold, brief, and elegant; though still, from the analogy which they bear to the language of common life, they are perfectly intelligible to contemporary readers of the same nation, and free from all appearance of harshness. When, therefore, we examine the poetry of an ancient people, with a climate and modes of life very different from our own, of whose popular language we are almost entirely ignorant, (for such is our condition in regard to the Hebrews), it is not at all surprising that we find many metaphors which to us appear unmeaning and harsh, though to them, perspicuous and elegant. Interpreters investigate the etymology of words, and ascertain their primitive and literal meaning, which they apply to all the places where the words in question occur, or resort to *metaphor* to help them out of difficulty; when perhaps, in the time of the poet, the literal signification of the phrase had long been obsolete, and the metaphorical had become the only meaning. As if the English should become a dead language, and some laborious commentator of future ages, finding the phrase *vein of poetry*, should explain it by saying, that the writer borrowed this expression from the veins of the human body, and applied it to the person of whom he was speaking, because he was such a poetic genius that poetry seemed to circulate quite through him, and to be all his life, as is the case



with blood in regard to the body ; and should then go on to expatiate upon the great beauty and expressiveness of this image ! S.

[B. p. 53.] *Imagery borrowed from plants and the heavenly bodies.*

The frequent recurrence for metaphorical expressions to natural objects, and particularly to plants and to trees, is so characteristic of the Hebrew poetry, that it might be almost called the *botanical* poetry. This circumstance, however, is not at all extraordinary, if we consider that the greater part of that people were occupied with tilling the earth, and keeping their flocks ; and further, that the cultivation of poetry, instead of being confined to the learned, was so generally diffused, that every valley reechoed the songs of the shepherds. Hence in the very few remains of the Hebrew writings which are come down to us, I mean the Scriptures, there are upwards of 250 botanical terms, which none use so frequently as the poets : and this circumstance I think gives an air of pastoral elegance to their poetry, which any modern writer will emulate in vain.

It is, however, extraordinary, that the stars should be so seldom mentioned in the Hebrew poetry, for the names of not more than three or four occur in the whole Bible. It has been said, that the patriarchal shepherds applied very much to the study of astronomy ; but if so, whence is it, that we meet with such frequent allusions to botanical subjects, and so few to the heavenly luminaries ? A comet is, however, I think, spoken of in Numb. xxiv. 17, and in allusion to David ; but it is by Balaam, who, residing on the borders of the Euphrates, it is reasonable to suppose was not altogether unacquainted with the Babylonish sciences.

MICHAELIS.

There appears but little foundation for this last remark of the learned professor. For in reality, so little are the heavenly bodies subjects of poetic allusion, that we find them but seldom introduced into any poetry either ancient or modern. Our annotator seems to forget that poetry is no more than painting in language, and has not respect to names but appearances. The appearance of every star is nearly the same, and consequently they can furnish no great variety of imagery, and that can only relate to their general qualities, their splendour, etc. ; whereas the nature and visible qualities of plants are infinitely diversified, and therefore admit of a much greater variety of allusion. Indeed a poem, the principal imagery of which consisted of the names of stars, would be a very strange and a very dull production. We cannot argue from the silence of the Hebrew po-



stry, that Moses or the writers of the Scriptures were ignorant its anatomy; neither is it fair to suppose that a nation of idolaters, in the remote country of the East, were unacquainted with the best of horses, which, in truth, from these causes, were the objects of adoration, and even of worship, in those parts, as appears from the notice in Mr. Warton's Account of the Ruins of Babylon. *Continued.*

[C. p. 56.] *Isaiah xxxviii. 30.*

In this passage Lebanon scarcely seems to be used for Jerusalem. Vs. 24 and 25 contain the boasting menace of Sennacherib, and seem to refer to his threatened subjugation of the whole kingdom of Israel, by seizing the passes to the country (of which Lebanon was one of the most difficult), taking possession of the strong holds, and cutting off the princes and warriors. (See Rosenmüller and Gesenius in loc.; comp. Jer. 22: 6, 23; Zech. 11: 1-4; Isa. 14: 8).

8

PSALM LXXXI. 31. *לַחֲזֹק הַיַּבֵּשׁ*.

*לַחֲזֹק הַיַּבֵּשׁ*. "The wild beast of the reeds," is a periphrasis for "the lion;" and that by no means obscure, if we bestow upon it a little attention. The lions make their dens very commonly among the reeds. "Innumerable lions wander about among the reeds and creep on the borders of the rivers in Mesopotamia." *AN. MAR. LIB. xviii. c. 7.* This is so familiar to the Arabs, that they have a particular name for the den or haunt of a lion, when it is formed among the reeds. *BOCHART, Hieroz. PAL. I. LIB. iii. c. 2.* The river Jordan was particularly infested with lions, which concealed themselves among the thick reeds upon the banks. *JOHAN. PHOCAS. Descrip. Loc. Sanct. c. 23.* See also *MAINDRELL'S Travels.* *JEROME* upon these words of Zechariah xi. 3. "The voice of the roaring of young lions, for the pride of Jordan is spoiled." "With the river Jordan (says he) which is the largest in Judea, and near which there are many lions, the prophet associates the roaring of those animals, on account of the heat of the climate, the vicinity to the desert, the extent of that vast wilderness, the reeds and the deep sedge which grow about it." Hence in Jer. iv. 7, the lion is said to go forth *לְחִצְיוֹ* (from his thicket); and xlix. 19, "to ascend from the overflowing of Jordan."—In this place, therefore, (Psalm lxxxi. 31) the *wild beast of the reeds*, the *herd of the strong*, and the *calves*, are the lions, the bulls, and the beasts wantoning about, or in plain

terms, the fierce and insolent tyrants: of whom, by a continuation of the metaphor, the prophet adds, "each of them eagerly" (for there is that force in the distributive in the singular number, and in the conjugation Hithpaël) "*striking with their feet, and disturbing the silver, or perhaps desirable rivers;*" that is, destroying, and laying waste the pleasant places of Judea. This very image is adopted by Ezekiel, xxxii. 2, and again xxxiv. 18, 19, in which places the verb רָפַץ thrice occurs in that sense; see also Dan. vii. 19. But whether רָפַץ be spoken of the motion of the river, as in the Latin *currere* (Virg. Georg. I. 132) so as to signify the river, is not altogether so plain.

LOWTH.

It seems most probable, however, that by הִיתָ קָנָה the crocodile is designated; and the interpretation of Rosenmueller is to me the most satisfactory, which I will give in his own words:

"Nobis quidem minime est dubium, genuinam loci nostri interpretationem petendam esse ex Ezechiele xxxii. 2, ubi regem Aegypti vates ita alloquitur: *Tu gentium leoni*, i. e. grassanti inter gentes, *similis es, et quasi quidam draco in aquoribus* (crocodilum significat Nilo flumini familiarem, vid. nostram ad eum loc. not.) *qui per fluvios tuos ruens aquas pedibus turbas*, וְתַרְפֵּס נְהַרְתָּם *et conculcas flumina eorum*, populorum, גִּיְוֵם, quod praecessit, i. e. exercitus eorum, coll. Iesai. viii. 7. Hinc nostro Psalmorum loco מְתַרְפֵּס (collective accipiendum) interpretamur *continuo conculcantes*, scil. alios, sive, subauditis e loco Ezecheliano vocibus גִּיְוֵם נְהַרְתָּם *flumina gentium*, hoc sensu: *Increpa feram arundinis*, i. e. ut recte Michaelis in nota quae proxime praecessit, crocodilum in arundinetis ad Nilum (vid. Exod. ii. 3. Iesai. xix. 6) degentem, *coctumque taurorum cum vitulis populorum, qui continuo concultant alios*. Formam *Hithpaël* non semper significationem *intransitivam* s. *reciprocam*, sed haud raro *activam* eamque *frequentativam* habere constat. Sic Genes. v. 22. xvii. 1. אֶת-אֱלֹהִים אָחַז-הָתָתָךְ *ambulavit continuo cum Deo*; 1 Sam. x. 6. 13. הִתְנַבֵּא *prophetavit continuo*; 2 Reg. xix. 20. הִתְפַּלֵּל *frequenter precatus est*; Esth. iv. 8. הִתְהַיָּן *indesinenter gratiam alterius exoravit*. Verba בְּרִצְי־כֶסֶף *propter fragmina argenti*, i. e. qui conculcant et opprimunt alios opum et divitiarum acquirendarum caussa; ut in carmine Deborahae triumphali (quod Psalmi lxxviii. quasi ἀρχέιπνον est) Ammonitae populum Israeliticum eum in finem bello aggressi innuuntur, ut ex eorum spoliis magnas opes auferrent; sed illos omnibus castris exutos, fustos fugatosque hoc fine excidisse docet poetria Jud. v. 19. *Vene-*



runt, inquit, reges, pugnarunt, pugnarunt Canaanis reges in Thaan-  
ach juxta aquas Megiddo, אֶחָדָה לִבְרִיתָהּ אֶחָדָה לִבְרִיתָהּ sed frustum argenti  
non acceperunt." S.

[D. p. 57.] Poetic imagery from the objects of nature.

We must not omit noticing, in this place, those images which are derived from rivers and fountains, and the earth recreated with rain; which are indeed used by our poets, but more frequently by the Orientals. For the scarcity of water, and the extreme heat of the summer, together with the wonderful fertility of the soil, when watered, render this a more elegant and jocund comparison in the East than with us. In spring and summer, if the east wind continues to blow a few days, the fields are in general so parched, that scarcely a blade of any thing green remains; many rivers and streams are dried up, the others are rendered briny, and all nature seems at the point of dissolution. After a plentiful shower, however, the fields revive beyond all expectation, the rivers resume their course, and the springs pour forth more delicious water. Mahomet makes use of this idea frequently, as figurative of the resurrection; and in this he shews himself no less of a philosopher than a poet. Dr. Russel has described this regeneration of nature in most lively colours in his *Natural History of Aleppo*, a book which every man ought to read, who wishes not only literally to understand the Oriental writers, but to feel them. Indeed, for want of this, many similes appear to us bold and unusual, which among the Orientals have a proper and distinct signification. CAAB, an Arabic poet, who was contemporary with Mahomet, in one of his poems compares the teeth of a young lady when she smiled to wine mixed with water, in which remained bubbles of yesterday's rain. In Isaiah there are many allusions of this nature, the favourable or adverse state of the nations being frequently expressed by this image, which many commentators have attempted to explain with more exactness than a poetical idea will bear. They have taken what the poet meant figuratively sometimes in a literal sense; and at other times they have explained every thing in a mystical manner, and have pretended to define what is meant by the *water*, who are those that are *thirsty*, etc. etc., intermingling many very pious reflections, but utterly foreign to the subject, and such as never once entered the mind of the poet. For it certainly was not the intention of the prophet to write enigmas, but to illustrate and adorn the beautiful figure which he introduces.



Thus, xxxv. 6, 7, speaking of the happy state of Palestine, at the time that Idumea was laid waste and subdued :

- " The desert, and the waste, shall be glad ;
- " And the wilderness shall rejoice and flourish :
- " For in the wilderness shall burst forth waters,
- " And torrents in the desert :
- " And the glowing sand shall become a pool,
- " And the thirsty soil bubbling springs :
- " And in the haunt of dragons shall spring forth
- " The grass, with the reed, and the bulrush."

It is however to be remarked, that the level ground suffers most from the intolerable heat, and that the deserts are almost destitute of water. He amplifies the same image in a different manner in xxxv. 17, celebrating the return of the Israelites from the Babylonian exile :

- " The poor and the needy seek for water, and there is none ;
- " Their tongue is parched with thirst :
- " I Jehovah will answer them ;
- " The God of Israel, I will not forsake them.
- " I will open in the high places rivers ;
- " And in the midst of valleys, fountains ;
- " I will make the desert a standing pool ;
- " And the dry ground streams of waters.
- " In the wilderness I will give the cedar ;
- " The acacia, the myrtle, and the tree producing oil :
- " I will plant the fir-tree in the desert,
- " The pine and the box together."

This is admirable painting, and displays a most happy boldness of invention ; the trees of different kinds transplanted from their native soils to grow together in the desert ; the fir-tree and the pine, which are indigenous to Lebanon, to which snow and rain, and an immense quantity of moisture, seem almost essential ; the olive, which is the native of Jerusalem ; the Egyptian thorn, indigenous to Arabia ; both of them requiring a dry soil ; and the myrtle, which flourishes most on the sea-shore. The same image occurs xxxiii. 18—20, but placed in a different light. The poet feigns in this place, that the wild beasts of the desert, and the dragons themselves, which had been afflicted with thirst, pour forth their nocturnal cries in thankfulness to God for sending rain upon the desert. See also xxxiv. 3, 4. Sometimes in the district of Jerusalem, which by nature is a very dry soil, and in which there are few streams, an immense flood is seen to burst forth, and with irresistible violence

fall into the Dead Sea, so that its water, which is more salt than that of any other sea, is rendered sweet. Gihon seems to have afforded the basis of the above description, a rivulet which proceeds from Sion, when perhaps some uncommon flood had prodigiously increased it. If I am not mistaken, David was the first who made use of this bold figure, but with such a degree of modesty as becomes the author who first introduced it, Psal. xlv. 2—6. I suspect something of the kind indeed to have happened about the time of his composing that Psalm, for it is usual in earthquakes for some streams to be entirely drained, while others overflow. But his imitators, in their ardour for novelty, have gone far beyond him. Thus Joel intermingles with this figure the picture of the golden age, iii. 18.

“The mountains shall drop down new wine,

“And the hills shall flow with milk,

“And all the rivers of Judah shall flow with water,

“And a fountain shall flow from the house of Jehovah,

“And shall water the valley of Shittim.”

MICHAELIS.

Earthquakes and tempests afford a copious source of imagery to the Hebrew poets. Compare Ps. xviii. Is. 24: 19, 20. Jer. 51: 25, 26. The pains of childbearing are also very frequently referred to in the sacred poetry, and sometimes in connexions where we should least expect it. See Is. 26: 17, 18. 42: 14, 15.

Rosenmueller observes that the description to which Michaelis refers in the preceding note is not to be found in Dr. Russell's Natural History of Aleppo, but in the Appendix to Shaw's Travels. He also quotes a passage on the same subject from Th. Hyde in Notis ad Ab. Perizolii Itinera Mundi, p. 10 (edit. sec. Oxon. 1767) as follows:

“Nomen *فِرْقَة*, *ברקה*, *splendorem*, seu *splendentem regionem* denotat, cum ea regio (*Läbya deserta*) radiis solaribus tam copiose collustretur, ut reflexum ab arenis lumen adeo intense fulgens a longinquo spectantibus aquarum speciem referat, et hicce arenarum splendor Arabibus (ex lingua Persica petito nomine) dicitur *سَرَاب* *Ser—äb*, i. e. *aquae superficies*, seu *superficialis aquarum species*. Haecque visus deceptio, proh dolor! saepe illudit siticulosos viatores, qui inter calidissimas istas arenas aquae refrigerium avidissime expetentes, ad longinqua loca dicto modo resplendentia, spe frustrata, haud raro contendere solent.”

It may gratify the reader to present him with the verses of Caab, the Arabic poet, which are referred to by Michaelis in the preced-



ing note. The Latin translation subjoined, is by Rosenmueller. The Arabic is taken from an edition of the poem published by G. I. Lette, Lugd. Batav. 1748, 4to.

تُجَلُّوْا عَوَارِضَ نِي ظَلَمٍ اِذَا اَبْتَسَمْتَ  
كَأَنَّهُ مِنْهَلٌ بِالرَّاحِ مَعْلُوْلٌ  
شَجَّتْ بِذِي شُبَيْمٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ مُخَبَّبَةٍ  
صَافِيٍّ بِأَبْطَحِ اضْحَى وَهُوَ مُشْمُوْلٌ  
تَنْغِي رِيَّاحُ الْعُدَا عَنْهُ وَأَقْرَطُهُ  
مِنْ صَوْبِ سَارِيَةٍ بِيضٌ يُعَالِيْلُ

"Dentes denundat candidos ubi subridet,

"Vino temperatum referens laticem,

"Cum vinum miscetur frigida unda, de loci reconditi aqua,

"Limpida per vallem labente, ventoque refrigerata boreali,

"A qua venti repulerunt sordes, quamque super eminent

"De imbris nocturnae effusione albae bullae.

S.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE VII.

[A. p. 64.] *Imagery derived from sepulchres.*

See a description of these sepulchres, SERLIO, *Architettura*, L. iii. ; VILLALPANDUS, *Apparat. Urb.* iii. 16 ; MAUNDREL'S *Travels*, p. 76.

Josephus makes frequent mention of the sepulchre of David. He calls the sepulchre itself *ταφον* or *μνημα*; and the chambers, into many of which the sepulchre was divided, *οικους τους εν τω μνηματι*; the cells *θηκας*. *Antiq.* vii. 15. xv. 7 ; Bell i. 2. The sepulchres of the Egyptian monarchs are described by Strabo, *Lib.* xvii. "About forty cells are cut in the caves." Of the remains of



which see a description in POCOCKE'S Description of the East, B. ii. c. 3. There are still remaining at Naples certain sepulchral vaults called *Catacombs*, which have not been exceeded in grandeur by any similar work of man. They appear to me, indeed, to be a monument of the most remote antiquity, which, though originally appropriated to some other use, about the Christian æra were made use of as burial-places. They are evidently of the same kind with other subterraneous works of that country, many of which have been destroyed by earthquakes, but many remain at this day at Cumæ, Misenum, Baiæ, the lake of Averno, and mount Posilipo. I have no doubt but these works were antecedent to the time of Homer, who describes them as inhabited by the Cimmerians, a people who live in perpetual darkness, (*Odyss. ix. sub. init.*) as Ephorus in STRABO, Lib. v. says of them, "that they live in certain subterraneous dwellings, which they call *Argillas*, and associate with one another by narrow fosses or passages;" and the remaining monuments demonstrate this account not to be altogether fabulous. These caves are called *Argillas*, from the nature of the soil in which I believe they are usually dug. "*Argil*, or that kind of earth which is used for cleansing, is white clay," HESYCH.; whence a hill between Puteoli and Naples was called *Leucogæus*, PLIN. Nat. Hist. viii. 11; although those mentioned above are all hewn out of the solid grit, in order to resist the injuries of time. Hence *Argiletum*, the name of a street in Rome, taken from some *Argil* of this kind, such as formed the cave of Cacus, which was not far from that street; though Virgil does not favour this opinion; see however Varro de Ling. Lat. Lib. iv. It is evident that Homer first, and Virgil after him, derived their notions of the infernal regions from these Cimmerian caves of Campania; and when Virgil is describing the cave of Cacus, when forced open by Hercules, the image of the infernal state immediately occurs:

- "At specus, et Caci detecta apparuit ingens
- "Regia, et umbrosæ penitus patuere cavernæ:
- "Non secus, ac si qua penitus vi terra dehiscens
- "Infernas reseret sedes, et regna recludat
- "Pallida, Dis invisâ, superque immane barathrum
- "Cernatur, trepidentque innisso lumine manes." *Æn. viii. 241.*

LOWTH.

All the southern parts of Palestine contiguous to Arabia, were furnished with immense caverns, which were originally inhabited by the *הַרְיִים* (Gen. 14: 6. 36: 20—30; compare Deut. 2: 12, 22; Je-

rome, Comment. in Obad. v. 4); the Troglodytes [Horites] of Scripture, who were subsequently expelled by the Edomites. These extensive and gloomy caves, with their fierce and cruel inhabitants, might afford at least as apt a picture of the infernal regions, as the Cimmerians of Homer and Virgil. S.

[B. p. 64.] *Sheol and its inhabitants.*

There is a passage in Cicero (Tusc. Quæst. L. I. c. 16) illustrative of the almost universal prevalence of the notion of a subterranean world in ancient times, even among those people who had no sepulchres of the kind to which our author refers in this Lecture and the preceding note.

“Sed ut deos esse natura opinamur, qualesque sint, ratione cognoscimus; sic permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium: qua in sede maneant, qualesque sint, ratione discendum est. Cuius ignoratio finxit inferos, easque formidines, quas tu contemnere non sine causa videbare. In terram enim cadentibus corporibus, hisque humo tectis, a quo dictum est *humari*, sub terra censebant reliquam vitam agi mortuorum; quam eorum opinionem magni errores consecuti sunt, quos auxerunt poetae.”

In the *לְאֵלִים* or under-world of the Hebrews there is something peculiarly grand and awful. It was an immense region, a vast subterranean kingdom (Isa. 14: 9. Jer. 5: 14. Job 26: 6), involved in thick darkness (Job 10: 21, 22), filled with deep vallies (Prov. 9: 18), and shut up with strong gates (Isa. 38: 10); and from it there was no possibility of escape (Job 7: 9, 10). Thither whole hosts of men went down at once (Num. 16: 30 ff.); heroes and armies with all their trophies of victory, kings and their people, were found there (Isa. 14: 9—20. Ezek. 31: 14, 16, 17, 18. xxxii); where they had a sort of shadowy existence, as manes or ghosts, neither entirely spiritual nor entirely material, engaged in the employments of their earthly life, though destitute of strength and physical substance, (Eccl. 9: 4—6. Job 3: 13—19. Compare 4: 15, 16).

The inhabitants of *לְאֵלִים* are called *רַפָּאִים*, that is, *weak, powerless; shades*, (Ps. 88: 10. Prov. 2: 18. 9: 18. 21: 16. Isa. 14: 9. 26: 14, 19; compare 14: 10). This is the explanation of Gesenius, who supposes the word *רַפָּאִים* to be the same as *רָפָּא*, *asleep, weak*; from the verb *רָפָּא*, *to fall asleep, to sink down*.

A similar representation of the shadowy and powerless condition of the departed, and of their employments, is given by Homer (Odyss.



xi), and after him by Virgil (*Æn.* vi.) See also Ossian's Poems, where the old Celtic heroes are represented as seated in the clouds, witnessing the deeds of their descendants, and attempting again to seize their swords, which, like vapour or mist, elude their grasp.

But רָפָאִים is the word used to denote giants; and how came the same word to designate the *manes* of the departed? Gesenius maintains that the word as applied to *giants* has a different origin; that in this sense it was originally a gentile noun, denoting the *sons of Rapha* (רָפָאִים, 2 Sam. 21: 16, 18), a gigantic tribe of Canaanites (Gen. 14: 5. 15: 20. Deut. 3: 11. Isa. 17: 15), and afterwards applied to all giants.

Most critics, however, have supposed the words to be of the same origin; though they have adopted different modes of accounting for the application of the term giants to the ghosts of the dead in Sheol. Michaelis is of the opinion, that after the gigantic Troglodytes (רָפָאִים, בְּנֵי עֵזֶק, הָרִי) were expelled by the Edomites (Deut. 2: 12, 22), their caverns were left uninhabited; and that afterwards they were regarded as the abodes of the infernal deities and of ghosts, and from this circumstance all ghosts were called רָפָאִים. (Note in Lowth, p. 466). Herder supposes that the giants of the old world (Gen. 6: 4), who were destroyed by the flood, first gave occasion to the idea of a kingdom of the dead; and that from them all its inhabitants were called רָפָאִים, (Geist, Th. I. S. 198). Rosenmueller, with more probability, supposes the appellation to have arisen from the gigantic size which spectres are always represented as assuming when they appear to men. (Schol. in Gen. 14: 5). This opinion seems to be confirmed by various passages of the heathen poets. For example:

"Infelix simulacrum, atque ipsius umbra Creusae,

"Visa mihi ante oculos, et nota major imago."

VIRGIL, *Æn.* II. 772.

"Saepe simulacris domus attonita magnis."

SENECA in Thyeste.

"Simulacra virum majora vivis."

Idem in Oedipo.

The *locus classicus* on this subject is Isa. xiv. A thorough discussion of all the passages in the Old Testament relating to the Sheol of the Hebrews, may be found in Sheid's *Dissertatio in Canticum Hiskiae*, Jes. xxxviii. 9—20, Lugd. Bat. Svo. 1769. (Compare also Herder, Geist, Th. I. S. 192 ff).

Such was the popular notion in regard to Sheol, and such the poetic representation of that shadowy empire; but that the ancient



Hebrews had, besides this, a religious belief in the immortality of the soul and a future state of retribution, may be made evident by examining a few passages of their Scriptures. Gen. 5: 24 compared with Heb. 11: 5. *And Enoch walked with God, and he was not : for God took him.—By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death ; and was not found because God had translated him : for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.* If there had been no belief in a future state of rewards for the righteous, how could Enoch's removal from the earth have been viewed as a token of the approbation of God ; especially as early or sudden death was anciently regarded, in all common cases, as a proof of the divine displeasure ? The tradition still exists among the Arabs, and is widely spread through the Eastern world, that Enoch or Idris, on account of his great piety, was taken by God to heaven, and received into Paradise, or Albordj, the mountain of God. Gen. 25: 8, Abraham died, *and was gathered to his people* ; certainly, not in the literal sense of *being buried among them*, for he died at a great distance from the land of his fathers.—Ex. 3: 6, *I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob* ; compared with our Saviour's commentary on these words, Matt. 22: 32, and the remarks of the apostle, Heb. 11: 13—16. In the time of Moses, God was still the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Christ declares that he is not a God of the dead, but of the living ; consequently, they were yet in existence : and the apostle to the Hebrews avers, that these patriarchs sought a *heavenly country*.—2 Kings 2: 11 ; Elijah was taken up into heaven ; in the New Testament we find him and Moses talking with Christ, and we are made acquainted with the subject of their conversation. (Matt. 17: 3. Luke 9: 31).—Do not all these allusions, illustrated as they are by the corresponding passages of the New Testament, imply an unshaken belief in a future state of conscious and happy existence ?

In the Psalms, however, we have evidence still more direct, of a belief in a future state of rewards and punishments. In the forty-ninth Psalm the righteous are exhorted not to be disturbed by the pride and oppression of the wicked, for it was impossible that their prosperity should continue : they would all die (vs. 7—12) ; they would be driven to Sheol like sheep, where Death would devour them (v. 14) ; while God would deliver the soul of the righteous from the power of Sheol, and receive him to himself (v. 15 ; com-

pare Ps. 73: 16—27).—In the sixteenth Psalm, the Psalmist expresses his confidence in God, because he had always made him his trust (v. 8), that he would not leave his soul in Sheol (v. 10), but would show him the path of life, the way to his presence, where is *fulness of joy*, and to his right hand where are *pleasures forevermore* (v. 11; compare Ps. 23: 4, 6).—In the seventeenth Psalm, the Psalmist, after complaining of the haughtiness and cruelty of his wicked oppressors (v. 9), concludes in regard to himself, that he should behold the face of God in righteousness, and be satisfied when he awoke with his likeness (v. 11). That the hope of the Psalmist here has reference to the life to come, is evident, because it is expressed as an antithesis to the portion of the wicked, which they have in this life, (v. 14; compare De Wette in loc.; compare also Dan. 12: 2, 3. Ezek. 37: 1—14. Is. 26: 19). S.

[C. p. 65.] *Imagery from the vices of men.*

The sacred writers, with a boldness peculiar to the Oriental world, have drawn some of their most striking imagery from the *vices of men*; which they have applied with great freedom not only to inferior topics, but to the most dignified subjects, and even to the Deity himself. The vices most frequently alluded to, are the two most destructive and disgusting which human nature ever exhibits, namely, *drunkenness* and *lust*. Deut. 32: 42, (compare Is. 34: 5, 6), the Almighty, speaking of the awful vengeance which he would take on his enemies, says that he *will make his arrows drunk with their blood*. Is. 49: 26, God declares that the enemies of Israel, when he punishes them, *shall be drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine*; 63: 6, *he will make them drunk in his fury*; 51: 21—23, the same image is drawn out to great particularity of detail, and is applied to his own people when suffering for their sins; and 24: 20, the whole earth is represented as reeling like a drunkard in consequence of the wrath of God. Ps. 78: 65, God, in his anger, is compared to a *mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine*.

The imagery derived from lust is principally employed, to depict the wickedness and folly of forsaking the worship of the true God and falling into idolatry. In the common language of the Hebrews, this is called *adultery*; but in poetry the picture is filled up, its most disgusting features exposed to view; and the apostates from true religion, in order to excite the deepest horror for their crime, are described in language applicable in its literal sense only to the



most impudent, shameless, and insatiable prostitutes. (See Is. 57: 7—9. Jer. ii. Ezek. xvi. xxiii. and the Prophecy of Hosea throughout). These two sources of imagery are combined with great effect by the author of the Apocalypse, (17: 4—6).

To those who are acquainted with the manners and sentiments of the Oriental world, this freedom of the sacred writers, instead of requiring apology, will appear as one of the highest perfections of their art. These representations, so far from exciting any feelings of lasciviousness or ideas of indelicacy in the minds of those to whom they were originally addressed, only served to raise their abhorrence and detestation of the crime; in the same manner as we are now moved to detest the cool, malignant cunning of Iago by a perusal of Othello, or to abhor the hellish cruelty of the English government under Charles II. by reading Old Mortality. The exclusion of females from the society of men in the East has given occasion to great freedom of language in regard to these subjects; and at the present day, an Arab who would scorn to be guilty of an immodest action, would not hesitate, if occasion called for it, to describe such an action in the most direct and appropriate terms: and the same is true of the Oriental writers. (Michaelis, Note in loc.; De Arvieux, Tom. III. c. 11). S.

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#### NOTES ON LECTURE VIII.

[A. p. 69.] *Imagery from the priesthood.*

Among the Hebrews there was a dignity and grandeur attached to the sacerdotal character, of which we can form but a faint conception. Jehovah, the invisible God, the Creator of the universe, condescended to be elected king of the Hebrews, (Ex. 15: 18. Num. 23: 21. Deut. 33: 5. Judg. 8: 23. 1 Sam. 8: 7. 10: 18, 19. 12: 12); for he had chosen them to be his own people, (Num. 11: 29. Deut. 32: 9). A throne was prepared for him between the cherubim over the ark of the covenant, where he sat and held audience with his ministers, (Ex. 25: 8, 22. Num. 7: 89. Compare Ps. 18: 11. 80: 2. 99: 1. Isa. 37: 16. 1 Sam. 4: 4. 2 Sam. 6: 2). The exalted privilege of having such a ruler and of being regarded with such favour, elevated the Hebrews far above all the other nations of the earth, and we find them dwelling upon this idea in their sacred songs with peculiar satisfaction, (Ps. xcvi. lxxxii. cxlvii). Now, the priests



were not only the ministers of religion, as among other nations, but they were the courtiers, the messengers, the household officers of King Jehovah; and their robes of office corresponded in richness and magnificence with their exalted rank: so that in the sacerdotal character was united all that is awful in religion, venerable in authority, dignified in station, and splendid in exterior magnificence. With the Hebrews, therefore, no imagery could be conceived more sublime and magnificent than that which was derived from the sacerdotal character and habit, (compare Eccles. 50: 1—16). The highest happiness and prosperity of the nation is described in language derived from this source, (Isa. 61: 10, 11); the regal dignity is still more elevated by being connected with the priesthood, (Ps. 110: 4); and the angels themselves are clothed like priests, (Ezek. 9: 3. Dan. 10: 5). In the New Testament the dignity of the Messiah is most elevated by his priestly office, (Heb. vii. viii.); and the exalted happiness and glory of the saints in heaven can in no way be so forcibly expressed as by calling them *kings and priests to God*, (Rev. 1: 6. 5: 10. 20: 6). As an example of the application of imagery of this sort, see Psalm cxxxiii.; of which Lowth has given an elegant paraphrase in Lect. XXV. (Compare Herder, Geist, Th. II. SS. 122—133). S.

[B. p. 70.] PSALM CXXXIX. 15. Compare Job x. 11.

I know not why our author should say that the *art of designing in needle-work was wholly dedicated to the use of the sanctuary*. None of the passages to which he has referred necessarily convey this idea, and the quotation from Ezekiel seems rather to intimate the contrary. Besides, the word *קָשָׁה*, which our author has translated by *acupingere*, appears to signify the making of *variegated or party-coloured work* of any kind; and not to be confined to needle-work, if, indeed, it is ever employed in that sense. S.

[C. p. 72.] PSALM CIV. 2—5.

Our author, in his interpretation of this Psalm, has suffered his favourite idea to carry him too far; for many of the images which he supposes to be borrowed from the sacred tabernacle, appear to have been derived from other sources.

V. 1. The word *שָׂרָה* is certainly not appropriated to the dressing of priests, but is in the most common use to express the idea of *clothing or covering*. (See Esth. 6: 8, 9. Job 7: 5. Ps. 65: 14).

V. 2. The reference to the light in the Holy of Holies is rather far-fetched; not to mention that we have no evidence of the existence of the Shechina excepting while the children of Israel were on their journeyings (Lev. 16: 2,) and at the dedication of Solomon's temple (1 K. 8: 10, 11), besides the testimony of Rabbins, those proverbial story-tellers, who themselves confess that it had disappeared long before their time, and had never been seen in the second temple.—The word *קִרְיָן* may be applied to the curtains of any other tent as well as to those of the tabernacle; and if there is any justice in the remark on the third verse, any raftered building may be compared to the air as well as the tabernacle. Similar objections may be made to the interpretation of the remainder of the third, and of the fourth verse; and when in the fifth, the firmness and durability of the earth is supposed to be compared to a movable tent, which must already have needed many repairs, the image, to say the least, is rather inept and frigid. (Compare Michaelis in loc.)

I much prefer the interpretation of Rosenmueller and De Wette. God is described in this Psalm as the Creator and Ruler of the universe, the imagery is borrowed from the splendour and magnificence of Oriental monarchs, and the writer has constantly in view the account of the creation in Gen. 1.

God is introduced in the first and second verses as clothed with light, like an Oriental king in his royal robes, glittering with gold and sparkling with gems, (compare the account of Sir John Malcolm's introduction to the Persian king, in *Sketches of Persia*); as other monarchs had their tents, he stretches out the heavens themselves for his royal pavilion; as earthly kings had their private apartments in the upper part of their palaces, (see Jahn, *Bibl. Arch.* Th. I. S. 214, compare Jer. 22: 13, 14. 1 Chr. 28: 11. 2 Chr. 3: 9), so God laid the beams of his chambers in the waters above the firmament, (compare Gen. 1: 7); as kings had their lofty chariots and fleet horses, so the clouds are God's chariot, and they are carried by the wings of the wind, (expressive of their swiftness); as other kings had their messengers and servants, so the winds and the lightnings are the messengers and servants of God; of him who founded the earth and fixed it immovably on its basis.

I trust the reader will be amused, if not edified, by the concluding remarks of Michaelis on these verses, which I will give in his own words:

"Mihi quidem, etsi nihil tabernaculi Levitici animo oberret, hae



tamen sententiae et imagines perpulcræ videntur : 'luce tanquam pallio amictus eras, cum primum ex æterna tua solitudine prodires, teque creatis mentibus præberes spectandum. Caelum tibi pro teatro est : caelum pro secreto a mortalibus caenaculo, aqua et grandine contiguato. Nubium tonante curru veheris, portato ventorum alis. Turbines tibi pro nuntiis, fulmina pro ministris adstant.' Quæ si possem carmine ita exprimere, ut Lowtho datum esse solet, Lowtho etiam iudici probarem. Sed hoc Dea negat, Latinique carminis per X annos neglectus." S.

[D. p. 72.] *Imagery from popular belief.*

There seem to me to be a few references, at least, of this sort in the sacred writings. For example, in Ps. 58: 5, 6, the comparison is derived from the vulgar opinion still prevalent in the East, that jugglers have the power of charming serpents and rendering them harmless; and when the charm fails and the serpent retains his venom, it is supposed that he is deaf, or that he had purposely closed his ears to the incantations. (See Bochart, Hieroz. P. II. L. III. c. 6; Niebuhr, Travels, Vol. I. p. 189). In Ps. 121: 6, there appears to be an allusion to the popular notion that the pains occasioned by sleeping in the open air in the night, are produced by the influence of the moon. This opinion prevails in the East to this day. (See Anderson's Travels in the East, p. 8). The Greeks and Romans supposed that the dew, so noxious to such as are exposed to it in the night, was produced by the moon. (See Heyne in Virg. Georg. III. 337). S.

[E. p. 72.] *Inadequacy of translations.*

It may be asserted of translations in general, and I am sure I have experienced the truth of the observation in this very attempt, that many of the minuter beauties of style are necessarily lost: a translator is scarcely allowed to intrude upon his author any figures or images of his own, and many which appear in the original, must be omitted of course. Metaphors, synecdoches, and metonymies, are frequently untractable: the corresponding words would probably in a figurative sense appear harsh or obscure. The observation, however, applies with less justice to our common version of the Bible than to any translation whatever. It was made in a very early stage of our literature, and when the language was by no means formed: in such a state of the language, the figurative diction of the Hebrews might be literally rendered without violence to the national taste;



and the frequent recurrence of the same images and expressions serves to familiarize them to us. Time and habit have now given it force and authority; and I believe there never was an instance of any translation, so very literal and exact, being read with such universal satisfaction and pleasure. GREGORY.

The student cannot be too frequently reminded, that it is vain for him to think of relishing the beauties of Hebrew literature without a familiar acquaintance with the Hebrew language. Many who speak of the beauties of the Bible, have no adequate conceptions of that which they profess to admire; and those who ridicule what they are pleased to term its faults, betray an ignorance that is pitiful indeed. It is true that the Bible, even in its English dress, is full of the most striking beauties; and it shows the amazing power of the sacred writers, that so much of excellence should still be perceptible after the lapse of ages and through the rubbish of translation. To those who have become acquainted with the literary merits of the Bible only through the medium of translations, I would earnestly recommend the attentive perusal of the following colloquy, from the pen of Sir William Jones. S.

## ARABS

## SIVE

## DE POESI ANGLORUM DIALOGUS.

Ut pateret, quam inepte de gentium exterarum poesi judicent ii, qui fidas tantum versiones consulant, colloquium, quod sequitur, olim contexui. Finxi enim Arabem quendam, qui sermonem Latinum Constantinopoli didicerat, cum Britanno quodam mercatore, homine literato, familiariter vixisse, et cum eo de variis Europæ Asiæque artibus solitum esse colloqui. Cum igitur die quodam ad portum una descenderent, et Britannus suæ gentis poetas in cælum laudibus efferret, risum Arabs vix potuit compescere, et, Mirum est, inquit, quod narras, ac portenti simile: cum credidero urbem hanc amœnissimam a maris hujus piscibus exstructam fuisse, tum demum poetas, ut tu ais, venustos in *Anglia* credam floruisse. Hem! in pastu pecudum regnent Angli, agros optime colant, lanam egregie tingant; sed eos a poesi alienissimos esse persuasum habeo. Sermonem *Latinum*, tuo hortatu, teque usus adjutore, didici; spem enim dedisti poetas complures elegantissimos legendi, sed nihil adhuc vidi, præter unum atque alterum *Horatii* carmen, *Ovidianus* quasdam elegias, et *Virgilii* nobilissimum poema, quod, meo judicio,

poesis dici mereatur. Visn' tu credam, in illo, quo tu natus es, terrarum angulo, poetas meliores quam in urbe *Roma* ortos fuisse! Tum *Britannus*, Ipse, inquit, judicabis; recitabo enim versiculos quosdam ex elegantioribus *Anglorum* poetis libatos, quos, ut pulchre intelligas, *Latine* reddam. Per mihi gratum feceris, inquit *Arabs*; sed cave quidquam iis ornamenti adjungas: verbum verbo redde. Tum mercator; Incipiam igitur a poetis heroicis: Sane, si placet, inquit alter; sed ullumne habes poetam, quem cum *Ferdinando* compares? Unum, inquit, atque alterum; sed palma *Miltono* facile deferenda est; cujus poema epicum, quod inscribitur *Paradisus Amissus*, ab omnibus merito celebratur; istius poematis recitabo exordium:

"De hominis prima inobedientia, et fructu  
 "Illius vetitæ arboris, cujus mortalis gustus  
 "Attulit mortem in mundum, omnesque nostras miseras,  
 "Cum amissione *Edeni*, donec unus major vir  
 "Redimat nos, et recuperet amaram sedem,  
 "Cane, celestis musa."<sup>1</sup>

Tum *Arabs* irridens, Parce, precor, inquit, nunquam enim versus audiui magis insipidos. Versus autem? imo, ne sermo quidem merus mihi videtur. Perge porro ad Lyricos. Ecquem proferre potes cum *Hafezo*, meis tuisque deliciis, comparandum? Multos, respondet ille; *Surrium*, *Couleium*, *Spencerum*, alios; et in primis illum, quem paullo ante citavi, *Miltonum*: is duo scripsit poemata, omni numero absoluta, quorum unum *Lætum* inscripsit, alterum *Tristem*. Quam dulcis hæc est, in primo carmine, matutinæ delectationis descriptio!

"Audire alaudam incipere volatum suum,  
 "Et canentem tremefacere stupidam noctem,  
 "A specula sua in æthere,  
 "Donec maculatum diluculum oriatur;  
 "Et tum venire, invita tristitia,  
 "Et ad meam fenestram dicere, Salve!  
 "Per cynosbaton, aut vitem,  
 "Aut plexam rosam caninam;  
 "Dum gallus vivaci strepitu  
 "Spargit postremam aciem caliginis tenuis,  
 "Et ad senile, aut horrei portam,  
 "Magnanime vacillat, dominas præcedens."<sup>2</sup>

Cum *Arabs* adhuc impensius rideret, et prope se in cachinnum

<sup>1</sup> Paradise Lost, B. I. vs. 1—6.

<sup>2</sup> L'Allegro, vs. 41—52.



effunderet, Age vero, inquit vir Britannus, iambos quosdam citabo *Popii* nostri, poetarum Anglorum, si artem ac suavitatem spectes, facile summus, si ingenium et copiam, paucis secundus; placebunt tibi hi versiculi, certo scio :

" Tremat *Sporus*—Quid? res illa serica,

" *Sporus*, merum illud coagulum lactis asinini!

" Vituperium aut iudicium, cheu! potest *Sporus* sentire?

" Quis dirumpit papilionem in equuleo?

" Attamen, liceat mihi percutere camicem hunc, auratas habentem pennas,

" Hunc pictum filium Iuti, qui fœtet et pungit."<sup>3</sup>

—Ohe, inquit *Arabs*, desine, si me amas: hæccine poesis dici potest? Præterea ad portum venimus, ubi frequens erit hodie mercatus. Hæc cum dixisset, videretque graviter ferentem et stomachantem *Britannum*, pollicitus est, se ad linguam *Anglicam* condiscendam aliquot menses impensurum, ut poetas, quos ille laudaret, sermone proprio loquentes posset perlegere.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE IX.

[A. p. 75.] ISAIAH LI. 15, 16.

רָגַע הָיָם.

רָגַע, "tranquillizing or instantaneously stilling:" it is commonly rendered *clearing*, *dividing*, not only in this, but in the parallel places, JER. xxxi. 35; JOB xxvi. 12. I am, however, of opinion, that the meaning of the word has been totally mistaken. It denotes strictly something *instantaneous*; a cessation of motion, or a *sudden quieting*; as when a bird suddenly lights upon a tree. See ISA. xxxiv. 14. The SEPTUAGINT very properly renders it, in the above-quoted passage in JOB, *καταναυσε*. Consult the CONCORDANCE.

LOWTH.

Maris Erythraei traiectionem a vate respici, est et nonnullorum ex Hebraeis interpretum coniectura, ut Iarchii, nisi quod is verbum רָגַע gallico *froncer*, *contrahi*, explicat. Alii, ut Kimehi, *findendi* notionem illi tribuunt, utrique ad Iob. vii. 5. provocantes, quo loco verba עוֹרִי רָגַע alii *cutis mea contracta, corrugata est*, alii, *fissa est*, interpretantur. Sed de fisso mari Erythraeo, in gratiam Israelitarum, vatem cogitasse, nullum nostro loco est vestigium. Imo vero Iere-

<sup>3</sup> Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.



mias, eadem, quae hic leguntur, verba repetens xxxi. 35, de potentiae divinae documentis in universum loquitur. Quod autem Lowthi attinet verborum רָגַע הַיָּם interpretationem, *tranquillans mare*, et eius iam ab Abenesra facta reperitur mentio. Verba eius sunt: *Sunt qui רָגַע interpretentur quiescere faciens postquam fremuerunt undae eius, notione assumpta nominis מְרָגוּץ, quies, Jerem. vi. 16.* Nobis tamen concinnior videtur vulgo recepta interpretatio: *Ego, Iova tuus, qui commoveo, sive, ut Hieronymus, conturbo, mare, ut fluctus eius fremant.* Ita iam LXX. Ταράσσω τὴν θάλασσαν. Chaldaeus: רָגַע בַּיָּם, *qui increpo mare.* Verbo נָחַף alias is interpres uti solet pro Hebraeo גָּעַר, *increpat*; videtur igitur nostrum רָגַע per literarum inversionem accepisse pro גָּעַר, collato loco supra L. 2. מְגַעְרָתִי אֶת־רֵיב הַיָּם, *increpatione mea exsicco s. exsiccavi mare, scil. rubrum.*

ROSENEMUELLER.

“לְנִטֵּעַ שָׁמַיִם. In the present text it is לִנְטֵעַ, to *plant* the heavens: the phrase is certainly very obscure; and in all probability is a mistake for לִנְטוֹת. This latter is the word used in v. 13, just before, in the very same sentence; and this phrase occurs frequently in Isaiah, e. g. xl. 22. xlii. 5. xlv. 24. xlv. 12. The former in no other place. It is also very remarkable, that in the Samaritan text, Numb. xxiv. 1, these two words are twice changed, by mistake, one for the other, in the same verse.”

LOWTH.

The use of the word נִטֵּעַ in reference to the heavens, which has occasioned so much difficulty to commentators, is very easily explained. It denotes the fastening of the pins of a tent, and is thence used to signify the act of pitching a tent (Dar. 11: 45), with which the heavens are often compared. Its meaning, therefore, in this place, is the same as that of נָטָה in v. 13; and there is no necessity for changing the text to לְנִטוֹת.

GESENIUS.

[B. p. 76.] PSALM XI. 6.

רַחֵם זִלְגָּפּוֹת.

This is an admirable image, and is taken from the school of nature. The wind *Zilgaphoth*, which blows from the East, is very pestilential, and therefore almost proverbial among the Orientals. In the months of July and August, when it happens to continue for the space of ten minutes, it kills whatever is exposed to it. Many wonderful stories are related of its effects by the Arabians, and their poets feign that the wicked, in their place of eternal torment, are to breathe this pestiferous wind as their vital air.

MICHAELIS.

## Meaning of פִּתְּחִים.

פִּתְּחִים "live coals," *ανθρακας*, as it is rendered by the old translator, CHRYS. in loc. Globes of fire, or meteors, such as Pliny calls *Bolidas*, Nat. Hist. ii. 26, or simply the lightning seems to be understood. Compare PSAL. xviii. 13, 14. JOSEPHUS on the destruction of Sodom, "God assailed the city with his thunderbolts;" Antiq. i. 11. PHILO on the same: "Lightning fell down from heaven." De Vit. Mos. i. 12. This is certainly more agreeable to the context than *snare*. The root is פִּתַּח, which, though it sometimes means to *ensnare*, yet more frequently means to *breathe forth*, or *emit*, fire, for instance. EZEK. xxi. 31. "In the fire of my wrath I will blow upon thee." The Ammonites are spoken of, as thrown into the furnace of the divine wrath: compare xxii. 21, where almost the same words occur, except that the corresponding (and in this case synonymous) verb פָּתַח is made use of, whence פִּתְּחִים, a bellows: JER. vi. 29. In the same sense the verb פִּתַּח is introduced, PROV. xxix. 8, "Scorners will inflame a city." So also the SEPT. SYMMACHUS, the Syriac; and rightly, as appears from the antithetic member of the sentence: "but wise men will turn away wrath." From this explication of the root פִּתַּח, the word פִּתַּח, a coal blown up, is rightly derived: and פִּתְּחִים, (EXOD. ix. 8.) *embers*, in which the fire may yet be excited by blowing.

LOWTH.

The literal meaning of פִּתַּח is a *net* or *snare*, (see Job 18: 9; Eccl. 9: 12; Prov. 7: 23; Ps. 119: 110); and in this place the word is most probably applied to those long and winding flashes, which we, in popular language, denominate *chain-lightning*. The Arabs call lightning of this sort سلاسل, *chains*; and Homer (Il. xiii. 812) gives it the name *μυστιξ*, a whip. All these names are evidently derived from the appearance of the lightning, to which they are applied.

S.

[C. p. 76.] Imagery from the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Eximie apto et lectissimo exemplo usus Noster. Quod enim supra monuerat, imagines aliquas apud Orientales certis rebus tanquam proprias fieri, quibus deinde audacius utantur poetae, id vero maxime in Sodomorum excidio usu venit, cui gravissimas terrarum calamitates et devastationes, licet non per omnia similes, soluta etiam oratione comparare solent. Exemplum praebeat Moses, salis etiam, et sulphuris, et incendii subterranei, in describenda Palaestinae



vastitate mentionem faciens, quae omnia translata modo a Sodomis sunt, neque proprie accipi in belli calamitate possunt. Videbunt, inquit Deuteron. xxix. 22, *calamitatem terrae, salem, et sulphur, omnemque terram exustam, quae non consemnatur, nec virescit, ne propullulant in illa herbae, similem eversis Sodomis et Gomorrhæ*. Nihil hic salis mentione mirabilius, nec intellectus Moses multis interpretibus, ut ei consulant, fingentibus, bitumen salem vocati. Hoc vero omne ex aspectu vallium mari mortuo circumiectarum intelligi facile potuisset. His enim, Libani nivibus per Iordanem auctum verno tempore innatat mare mortuum, unum omnium salissimum : easque, recedens paulo post, sale convestit. (Vide Pocokii itinerum commentarios, Vol. II. P. I. p. 36. Ezech. xlvii. 11). Quo maris dono licet in sua commoda utantur accolae, facit tamen copia, ut non magnus illarum vallium fructus habeatur : cumque illa valle, exustis olim urbibus vicina, nihil sterilius in omni Palaestina sit, indicium sterilitatis salem habere coeptum est, et urbes etiam vastitatis sale conserere, et steriles agros salsuginosos vocare : Ierem. xvii. 6. Ps. cvii. 34. Iob. xxxix. 6. Iud. ix. 45. Quod enim ad haec loca habent interpretes, salem terrae sterilitatem inducere, si de sale communi, ut volunt, accipiat, magnam prodit rerum obviarum ignorantem, iure castigatam a doctissimo Altmanno §. XVII. Exercitationis de *Sale terrae* (in *Meletem. philologica—exegeticis* T. I. p. 47—51), quamquam hac parte sine dubio errat, quod mari mortuo salem veri nominis, contra veterum et recentiorum fidem negat, cuius tanta illi copia est, ut gravitas eius aquae communi collata sit ut 5, ad 4.

Hanc Mosis in soluta oratione audaciam qui cogitaverit, imaginem vastitatis a Iesaia informatam, non ad vivum resecat. Sufficiet illi, quae nunc est, horrenda Idumaeae vastitas, nec quia ardentibus rivos fumumque perpetuum (qui et ipse erumpere identidem ex mari mortuo solet), in illa non videt, statim cum Iudaeis, Christianis multis, eoque, quem plerique in Iesaia sequuntur, Vitringa, aliam quaeret in Italia Idumaeam. Qui quidem error, alios plures trahens, exemplo esse potest, quam infelicitur, frigido pectore nimisque sani ad poemata Hebraeorum accedentes, in eorum interpretatione versentur, audacissima carmina ita lecturi, ut solutam, et mediocrem, et exsanguem orationem : atque quid non iucunditatis solum sed et utilitatis habeat de poësi Hebraeorum suscepta tractatio. Confer etiam similem vastitatis Idumaeae descriptionem apud Ieremiam, Iesaiam in toto illo capite imitatore, XLIX. 18.

MICHAELIS.



[D. p. 78.] PSALM XVIII. 8—16.

For an illustration of the nature of the language and imagery in this Psalm, see the remarks on Psalm civ. Note C on Lect. VIII. There appears to be little need of supposing the materials of this sublime description to be derived from the scene which was exhibited on Sinai. The ordinary convulsions of nature would afford ample materials to such an imagination as that of the writer of this Psalm. S.

[E. p. 80.] *Imagery from sacred history.*

Notissimum huius licentiae exemplum Elias, a Malachia pro severo morum castigatore positus. Nullus tamen hac parte Hebraeus poëta audaciam aequat Apocalypseos, libri, graecis quidem verbis scripti, sed sentiis, colore, spiritu denique, Hebraico. Huic alia Aegyptus, Sodoma, Hierosolyma, Babylon, novus denique Gogus et Magogus, ad Ezechielici imaginem effictus. Tentari simile quid et a Iesaia volunt; nec obstrepere ausim, si de capite LXIII. solo id dicatur, ubi ignotus novusque hostis a propheta, vivis omnia coloribus pingente, noto Edomi nomine insignitur. Saepe tamen id fieri non existimo, nec cum illis facere audeo, qui tanquam aliquam mysticam geographiam pepererunt. Insolentius etiam quid tentare videtur Apocalypsis, nec nominibus solum, sed et numeris historiae antiquae uti. Vix mihi persuadeo, chronologica esse, quae de tribus annis et dimidio, de XLII mensibus, de 1260 diebus habet; sed suspicor, miserrima tempora describi, illis similia, quae per totidem menses vivente Elia fuerunt. Chronologica, quae hic multi quae-runt, ex libro etiam omnium obscurissimo disciplinae omnium obscurissimae lucem se daturos professi, multum abesse a vaticiniorum ingenio videntur. Sunt prophetiae fere eadem in imaginibus informandis leges, quae poëmatibus: valde autem frigebit poëta, si nimis sanus numeris rem accurate prosequatur, exponatque, quo die pug-natum sit, quot ceciderint in acie, et quae alia sunt eiusdem generis. Pictores, poëtae et prophetae valde cognati: horum visionibus explicandis si quis leges hermeneuticas condere velit, multa a pictoribus et poëtis discere potest. A quibus artibus alienissimi homines, et omnino barbari, si ad vaticinia explicanda accedant, non mirum est, omnia eos proprie accipere, ac tum demum sibi sapere videri, quando figmenta et monstra procudunt chiliastica. Memini, qui id agens gloriaretur, a se primo intellecta prophetarum et Ioannis vaticinia, se primum eos equuleo detraxisse.

MICHAELIS.

[F. p. 80]. *Imagery from poetic fable.*

Professor Michaelis makes a very considerable addition to this Lecture, concerning those images or figures which are taken from poetic fable. He asserts that such fable is essential to all poetry : that whoever has a taste for poetry cannot possibly take it in a literal sense, and that the sole purpose of it is ornament and pleasure.

He observes that there are many particulars, in which a wonderful agreement may be discovered between the fables of the Greeks and Romans, and those of the Hebrews. He is of opinion that this agreement clearly indicates a common source, which he supposes to be Egypt. From Egypt, Homer and the other Greek poets borrowed the principal of their fables, as we may learn from Herodotus and Heliodorus : nor is it at all improbable, that the Hebrews should do the same, who were for two successive ages the subjects and scholars of the Egyptians. The most ancient Hebrew poem, Job, abounds in Egyptian and fabulous imagery : as may be seen in the professor's dissertation on that subject before the academy of sciences.

GREGORY.

Recent investigations have had no tendency to confirm the conjectures of Michaelis, in regard to the poetic fable of the Hebrews : and they are, for the most part, so chimerical, that it could serve no good purpose to insert them here. That there are, however, images in the sacred poetry which may justly be said to have their origin in poetic fable, scarcely admits of doubt ; and if any analogy exists between them and the stories of heathen mythology, I apprehend that it is to be found in the descriptions of the supernatural, or rather, symbolical beings, which are frequently introduced with so much effect by the prophets. Of these the most important are the Cherubim, which in some circumstances forcibly remind us of the Griffin of the Celts ; the Typhonic dragon of the Greeks ; the Sphinx of the Egyptians ; and the winged angel of Oriental mythology (*Simorg-Anca*, *Soham*, etc.), which resided on mount Kaf, and spoke all the languages and was acquainted with all the sciences and religions of the world. He waged a constant war with the giants of the old world, and guarded the treasures of Paradise. (Comp. Sketches of Persia).

We first find the Cherubim guarding the way of the tree of life (Gen. 3: 24) ; images of them are then placed in the sacred tabernacle on the ark of the covenant, with their faces turned towards it, and their wings overshadowing the mercy-seat, or the throne of Je-

hovah, (Ex. 25: 17—20. 36: 8, 35); and in the temple of Solomon there are images of the same sort, though more magnificently executed, (1 Kings 6: 23—29; 2 Chron. 3: 7, 10—13; compare Ezek. 41: 18, 19). Hence, "*He who dwelleth between the Cherubim*," came to be an honorary appellation of Jehovah, (1 Sam. 4: 4; 2 Sam. 6: 2; Ps. 8: 2; Isa. 37: 16). In the Psalms and prophets they are introduced as the supporters of Jehovah's throne, or the bearers of his chariot when he rides in the clouds, (Ps. 18: 11; Ezek. 1: 10; 10: 14; Rev. 4: 6). Ezekiel describes four Cherubim, each of them having four faces, namely, of a man, a bullock, a lion, and an eagle, (Ezek. 1: 10); and St. John, who, according to his usual method, adopts the imagery of Ezekiel and modifies it by his own prolific fancy, gives to one of his Cherubim the face of a lion, to another the face of a bullock, to the third the face of a man, and to the fourth that of an eagle, (Rev. 4: 6). The reason of these figures being chosen for the Cherubim is thus explained by the Jewish Rabbins: "*Dixit R. Abin nomine R. Abhu: quatuor sunt, qui principatum in hoc mundo tenent. Inter omnes homo, inter aves aquila, inter pecora bos, inter bestias leo. Quilibet horum regnum habet et magnificentiam quandam; ponuntur autem sub throno majestatis divinae S. D. Ez. i. 10. Hoc vero cur factum est? ut nullum ex illis se efferat in mundo, sed sciant, regnum Dei dominari in omnia.*" (Midrasch Thehillim CIII. 19. Compare Herder, Geist, Th. I. S. 160 ff.; Rosenmueller, Scholia in Ez. I. 10; Eichhorn, Comment. in Apoc. IV. 6).

That these Cherubim are intended for allegorical figures and not for real existences, seems manifest from the different descriptions which are given of them in different parts of the sacred writings. (Compare the passages already cited). In condescension to our condition as creatures of sense, God presented to the minds of the sacred writers, in prophetic vision, such images as are best adapted to give us some apprehension of the indescribable glories of the invisible world, and of the inexpressible, and, to human minds, the inconceivable majesty of the Godhead. (Compare the description of the heavenly city in Rev. xxi.) Few considerate men will venture to assert, that the visible appearance of heaven and of heavenly beings to a disembodied spirit, will be exactly conformed to the descriptions of them which are given in the Bible. It is as great an error to take the *costume* for the *sentiment* as it is to mistake the *dress* for the *man*.



Similar remarks may be applied to the Seraphim, (Isa. 6: 2); but as they are mentioned but once, and the description of them is then not very minute, we have not the means of forming an accurate judgement respecting them.

Some of the malicious beings, also, introduced by the prophets, seem to be allegorical or fabulous. Isa. 13: 21 and 34: 14 mention is made of *סַטִּירִים*, *Satyrs*, a mischievous set of fiends, with heads and breasts like men, and the lower parts like goats, who, according to the universal belief of the Oriental world at the present day, infest the woods and solitary places, and amuse themselves by dancing and shrieking, and make it their business to perplex and mislead travellers, whom they finally murder that they may devour their flesh. (See *Mines of the East*, Vol. III. p. 144; *Bochart, Hieroz.* T. II. 830. III. 847). "Edessa remained a wilderness drunk with blood, (says *Abulfaragius*) and full of the mournful cries of her sons and daughters; and the *Sirens* (*סַטִּירִים*, *סַטִּירִים*) came by night to devour the flesh of the slain," (*Abulfarag.* p. 333). The *Zend-Avesta* asserts that these demons are the descendants of *Djemak*, the sister of *Djemjid*, by a *Dew*, (devil). (*Zend-Avesta*, T. III. p. 99). They are the same as the *Ghools* of the modern Persians and Arabs, of whose malicious disposition and mischievous pranks there are some very lively and humorous descriptions in *Sir John Malcolm's Sketches of Persia*. Isa. 34: 14, *רֵיחַ* are mentioned; spectres in the form of women, who were accustomed to wander about in the night, entice men to fornication, murder children, and commit other crimes. (*Buxtorf, Lex. Talmud.* p. 1140; *Eisenmenger, Judenthum*, Th. II. S. 413). In an old Syriac treatise against the ascetic monks, it is said, that *the female night-ghosts* (*ܐܡܪܐܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܐ*) *come to them* (the monks), *and lay themselves beside them, and conceive from them, and become pregnant; and thence are born devils and dancing spectres, who fall upon the daughters of men.* (See *Gesenius's Commentary* on the passages cited). These last may perhaps with equal propriety be classed with *popular superstitions*; (see *Lect. VIII. Note D*). S.

## NOTES ON LECTURE X.

[A. p. 82.] PSALM CX. 3.

Some of the more modern translators seem at length agreed, that this is the proper sense of the passage; none of them, however, as far as I have been able to judge, has hitherto actually explained it at length. I shall, therefore, take advantage of this opportunity to give my sentiments upon it, lest doubts should afterwards arise concerning the meaning of a very important, and (as I think) a very clear passage of holy writ. The principal difficulty proceeds from the word *נֶרְדָּם*, and from the ambiguity of the particle *נ* and the ellipsis of the word *נֶרְדָּם*: which, I think, will be readily cleared up, if we attend to the following examples, the nature and meaning of which is evidently similar. PSALM IV. 8.

"Thou hast excited joy in my heart,

"Beyond the time in which their corn and wine increased:"

That is, "beyond (or superior to) the joy of that time."

"Although their shrines are *before* Jerusalem and Samaria:" Is. x. 10.

That is, "excel the shrines of Jerusalem and Samaria." JOB xxxv.

2. "My justice *before* God:" that is, "My justice is greater than the justice of God:" (compare xxxii. 2, and xl. 8.) In the same manner *נֶרְדָּם*, "*before the womb*," is the same as *נֶרְדָּם קֶדֶם*, "*before the dew of the womb*." Nor are there wanting in the Greeks examples of similar ellipses: *Μηδ' Ολυμπιας αγωνα φερετρον αυδασομεν* "Neither can we celebrate a contest more noble *than is* that of Olympia:" *μηδε του Ολυμπιακου αγωνος ετερον βελτιονα*. PIND. *Ολυμπ.* A. v. 11. et Schol. Edit. Oxon.

*Ως η λακαινα των Φρυγων μειον πολεις;*

"As if the city of the Lacedemonians were smaller *than that* of the Phrygians." EURIP. *Andron.* v. 193.

The metaphor taken from the dew is expressive of fecundity, plenty, multitude: (compare 2 SAM. xvii. 11, 12; MIC. v. 7.) "A numerous offspring shall be born unto thee; and, a numerous offspring it shall produce." *נֶרְדָּתְךָ*, "thy youth," or "the youth that are produced from thee;" the abstract for the concrete, as *שֵׁיבָה*, "whiteness," or being grey-headed, for a grey-headed man, LEV. xix. 32. *שִׁבְרִי*, "captivity," for a captive, ISA. xlix. 24, and so the Chaldee interpreter takes the following, *רְחוּן לְרוּחָאָן תוֹלְדָהָךְ*, "Thy offspring shall sit (or remain) in confidence." LOWTH.

[B. p. 83.] ECCLESIASTES XII. 2—6.

Interpretibus plerisque aliis felicior in allegorica senectutis descriptione versatus est EVSEB. TRAVG. EBERT in Dissert. *Imago Senis Salomonei ex Cap. XII. Eccles. ad analogiam linguae poeticae expressa*, Lips. 1770. 4. Quae scriptio quum hodie in paucorum manibus fuerit, non ingratis lectoribus rem nos facturos speramus, si interpretationis Ebertianae summam, qualem ipse in paraphrasi exhibuit, subiiciamus. Est vero talis: “Esto auctoris tui ac conditoris memor, o! quicumque es, cui laetior arridet fortuna, antequam dies funesti annique superveniant, quos ubi adesse senseris, protinus exclamabis: ingrati sunt, et displicent mihi valde! Antequam, pulsa priorum annorum serenitate ac luce, tristior aetas te excipiat, eorum vitae similis, quibus, involventibus diem nimbis, squalida nox coelum abstulit, solemque, et lunam, et reliquorum siderum ignes eripuit, recurrentibus aliis post alias imbriferis nubibus. Antequam tempus instet, quo tremant, ruinosae veluti domus custodes, brachia et manus, et incurventur, quibus sustinebatur, robusta pedum fulcra, et, peracto comminuendi labore, ferias veluti agant molentes (i. e. dentes), et obscurantur oculi, quorum per orbem, tanquam per fenestras, mens ipsa transspiciebat, et claudantur fores (i. e. labia) ad plateam (i. e. extrinsecus), propter vocem molentis ancillae debiliorem (i. e. linguae obsequium domino, dentibus amissis, denegantis), et, despectis suavioribus sonis, surgas ad cantum volucrum; tempus, inquam, quo vel remotissima quaeque timebis, viamque perhorresces, quamvis excusserit flores amygdala, et circumvolitet locusta (i. e. quamvis formosissima anni tempestas aut incipiat aut adsit); et evanescat omnis cupiditas et voluptas, cum iam homini adeunda sit mansura in his terris domus, ad quam conlacrumantium sequente turba, efferatur. Memor igitur esto patris ac conservatoris tui, dum res, et aetas, et ipsius voluntas patiuntur, antequam vivo sanguinis tui fonti idem eveniat quod puteo, super quo, remoto fune argenteo, et retro currente aurea trochlea, frangitur, quae ab ipsa pendebat, situla, cessante ita totius machinae usu ac motu, cuius ope aqua in subiectam cisternam vehebatur.” In versu 5. tamen verba *וְהָיָה הַשֵּׁקֶרַח* reddenda puto: *et antequam floreat amygdalus*, i. e. antequam cani, instar florum in capite alborum, progredient copiose: flores amygdali quum aliquamdiu in arbore extiterunt, et iam in eo sunt, ut defluant, albescere solent. Quae proxime sequuntur, *וְהָיָה הַחֵלֶב*, verto cum Bocharto (*Hieroz.* P. II. L. IV. Cap. VIII. T. III. p. 338. edit. Lips.), *et antequam in-*



*gravescat femur*, i. e. *gravior et tardior fiat incessus*, חָבֵב collato cum Arabum حَبَبٌ, *caput femoris*. Aliorum sententias enarravimus in Notis ad Bochartum l. c. p. 334. seqq. In versu 6. observavit iam Hieronymus, "contritionem hydriae super fontem et confractionem rotae super lacum per metaphoram mortis aenigmata esse," neque igitur curiose inquirendum est, quae corporis membra per singulas istas imagines intelligantur. ROSENMUELLER.

[C. p. 83.] ISAIAH XXVIII. 23—29.

Four methods of threshing are here mentioned, by different instruments; the flail, the drag, the wain, and the treading of the cattle. The staff or flail was used for the grain that was too tender to be treated in the other methods. The drag consisted of a sort of frame of strong planks, made rough at the bottom with hard stone or iron: it was drawn by horses or oxen over the corn-sheaves spread on the floor, the drivers sitting upon it. The wain was much like the former, but had wheels with iron teeth, or edges, like a saw; and it should seem that the axle was armed with iron teeth or serrated wheels throughout. The drag not only forced out the grain, but cut the straw in pieces for fodder for the cattle; for in the Eastern countries they have no hay. The last method is well known from the law of Moses, which 'forbids the ox to be muzzled, when he treadeth out the corn.'

V. 28. חָבֵב יִיחָבֵב I have annexed these to the preceding, disregarding the Masoretic distinction; in this I follow the LXX (though they have greatly mistaken the sense) and Symmachus. I suspect also that the ך before חָבֵב has been obliterated, which Symmachus expressed by the particle *δέ*, the Vulgate by *autem*. The translation will sufficiently explain my reasons. חָבֵב, however, seems to be taken for corn Ps. civ. 14. and Eccl. xi. 1, "Cast thy bread," that is, "Sow thy seed or corn, upon the face of the waters:" in plain terms: *sow without any hope of a harvest; do good to them on whom you even think your benefaction thrown away*. A precept enforcing great and disinterested liberality: with a promise annexed to it; "for after many days thou shalt find it again:" *at length, if not in the present world, at least in a future, thou shalt have a reward*. The learned Dr. George Jubb suggested this explanation, which he has elegantly illustrated from Theognis and Phocylides, who intimate that to do acts of kindness to the ungrateful and unworthy, is the same as sowing the sea:

Ἀνέστη δ' ἐν ἐφύκτῳ ποταμῶντι γῆρας ἄνθρωπος,  
 ἦσαν καὶ στενὰς ποταμὸν αὐτὸς ποταμῶντι  
 Οὐκ ἦν αὖ ποταμὸν στενὰς ποταμῶντι ἄνθρωπος  
 Οὐκ ἦν ποταμὸν ἐν ἐφύκτῳ ποταμῶντι ἄνθρωπος.

THEOC. ΓΕΩΡΓ. τ. 165

Μὴ νομίζῃς ἐν ἐφύκτῳ ποταμῶντι ἄνθρωπος ἐν ποταμῶντι.

FINCII. v. 142

They, indeed, invert the precept of Solomon : man is a creature that they should :

— *hæc homines dicunt : hæc poëta dicunt.* —

LAVY.

Locus citatus vis nulla probandi inest. De loco Salomonis sententiam dixi in notis paraphrasi præfatione subiectis. Pertinet ad navigationem et commercia. Ps. civ. 3<sup>o</sup> non patitur esse, non terminum, sed cœlum.

MICHAELIS.

[D. p. 35.] *Prophecy parables.*

Hoc loco commemoranda quoque erat alia ab Ezechie prophecia parabola (XVII.) de vine ab aquila plantata scilicetque castris, mox vero, quod spem falleret, extirpata (vs. 1—10), quam vix statim (vs. 11 seqq.) ipse explicat de regis Iudæorum a Babilonio, quocum foedus sanciverat, descendentis perfidia, morte ignominiosa ipsi luenda.

ROSENTHALLER

[E. p. 35.] *Fables of Jotham and Nathan.*

Poetry seems to me to be often strangely confounded with oratory, from which it is, however, very different. These instances appear to me only the rudiments of popular oratory, the *ancient and unrefined mode of speaking*, as LAVY calls it : and if the reader will be at the pains to examine LIV. L. ii. c. 32, I dare believe he will be of the same opinion. Poetry, as our author himself has stated, is one of the first arts, and was in a much more perfect state, than we should suppose from the passages in question, long before the days of Jotham : oratory is of more recent origin, and was, we may well suppose, at that period in its infancy ; as CICERO remarks that it was one of the latest of the arts of Greece. Brut. c. 7. MICHAELIS.

Ad artem rhetoricam apologorum usum, ob magnam, quæ eis inest, vim in persuadendo, referebant Veteres, vid. ARISTOTELES Rhetor. II. 20. (qui apologos *δημηγορικῶν* appellat, i. e. concioni- bus accommodatos), et CICERO de Orat. II. 66. § 264. Cf. G. F.

LESSING von dem Vortrage der Fabeln, p. 122. edit. prim. Verissime APHTHONIVS, Progymnasm. init. animadvertit, fabulam processisse a poetis, sed cum oratoribus communicatam esse ex eo, quod praeceptum complectetur. (Ὁ μῦθος ποιητῶν μὲν προῆλθεν γεγῆν-  
νεται δὲ καὶ ῥητόρων κοινὸς ἐκ παλαιότητος). Legisse iuvabit, quae de Iothami fabula observavit HERDER in libro vom Geist der Ebraeischen Poesie, P. II. C. VIII. p. 275; et de fabulae origine in universum, ibid. p. 13. seqq. edit. prim. Praeter Iothami et Nathanis (2 Sam. xii. 1 seqq.) apologos, alius brevissimus exstat 2 Reg. XIV. 9, 10, de carduo qui pro filio suo a cedro Libani filiam in matrimonio postulasset, mox vero a feris bestiis esset proculcatus, quo Ioas, Israelitarum rex, Amaziae, regi Iudae, dissuadet bellum, ad quod ab eo fuerat provocatus, illiusque salse perstringit temeritatem, qui cum potentiore Israelitarum rege vellet certamen inire, et maiora tentare, quam assequi, vel sustinere posset. ROSENMUELLER.

[F. p. 86.] PSALM LXXX. 16—18.

V. 16.  $\text{הַיְדָּה}$  is probably a verb in the imperative mode, with  $\text{ה}$  paragogic, from  $\text{הָדָה}$  (compare  $\text{הָדָה}$ ); and not a noun, as Lowth supposes. Compare the Arabic  $\text{كُن}$ , *tegit*. The meaning of the passage is: *Protect what thy right hand hath planted*,  $\text{בֶּן אֲמִצָּדָה}$ ,  $\text{הַיְדָּה}$ , *the son whom thou hast made strong for thyself*: that is, the *Israelitish nation*, which God often addresses as his son. (Compare Ex. 4: 22. Hos. 11: 1).

V. 18.  $\text{אִישׁ יְמִינִי}$ , *the man of thy right hand*; that is, *he who is joined to thee by solemn covenant*; because the Orientals swear by raising the right hand: or rather, according to Rosenmueller, the Hebrew nation is called *the man of God's right hand*, because Jehovah had, by his power, delivered them from Egyptian bondage. (Compare vs. 9 and 16). S.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE XI.

[A. p. 89.] *Mystical allegory.*

I admire the perspicacity of our author in discovering this circumstance, and his candour in so freely disclosing his opinion. I am, however, much inclined to suspect those qualities which are



supposed to be altogether peculiar to the sacred poetry of the Hebrews : and there is, I confess, need of uncommon force of argument to convince me, that the sacred writings are to be interpreted by rules in every respect different from those, by which other writings and other languages are interpreted ; but in truth this hypothesis of a double sense being applicable to the same words, is so far from resting on any solid ground of argument, that I find it is altogether founded on the practice of commentators, and their vague and tralatitious opinions.

MICHAELIS.

If the Jewish religion was designed by the omniscient God to be preparatory to the Christian ; if the institutions and rites recorded in the Old Testament were intended to prefigure the more perfect dispensation revealed in the New : then some parts of the Hebrew Scriptures, at least, must be interpreted by rules altogether peculiar, and not applicable to any other writings ; for no other writings were ever designed to answer a similar purpose. No one will deny that the Supreme Disposer of events had power to make the institutions and history of the Jewish church typical of the institutions and history of the Christian ; and if I understand the language or practice of the New Testament writers, they affirm that he has done so. The business of *allegorizing*, indeed, has been carried to dangerous and ridiculous excess by many Christian commentators ; but with the limitations which Lowth has affixed to it (pp. 89—91), I see nothing unreasonable in the *mystical allegory*, and it appears to me to be in strict conformity with the usage of Christ and his apostles. (Compare, however, Doederlein, Instit. Christ. Theol. Tom. II. pp. 228—277).

S.

[B. p. 90.] *Figurative sense obscured by the literal.*

When this happens to be the case, how are we to know, that the other subject or sentiment, which our author describes as almost totally eclipsed or extinguished by the superior light, is intended by the writer ? If, as I am fully persuaded, a clear and exact picture of the Messiah be exhibited in Psalm cx., what occasion is there to apply it also to David, who never performed the priestly function, nor ever sat at the right hand of God, that is, in the Holy of Holies, at the right of the ark of the covenant ? On the contrary, if in Psalm xviii. the description of David's victories be so predominant, as that it can scarcely be made to speak any other sentiment, what occasion is there to apply it at all to the Messiah ?

MICHAELIS.

## [C. p. 91.] PSALM II.

If, as we learn from the authority of the apostle Paul, this Psalm relates chiefly to Christ, his resurrection, and kingdom; why should we at all apply it to David? I do not deny that the victories of David, as well as of other kings of Jerusalem, to whom no person has thought of applying the poem in question, might be celebrated in language equally bold and powerful: but let us remember, that we have no right to say a work has relation to every person of whom something similar might be said, but to that person alone, who is the actual subject of it. If Christ, therefore, be the subject of this poem, let us set aside David altogether. MICHAELIS.

But if David was a type of the true Messiah, might not language applicable to the one, be applicable also to the other? S.

[D. p. 93.] *Mystical poetry of the East.*

It is well known that the Oriental nations are exceedingly fond of mystical poetry, and that they usually assign a *double sense* to most of their favourite poems. From the remarks already made (Note A), it is evident that they can have no mystical allegory of the kind which we have supposed in the Bible; still it will afford important aid in this investigation, to know the views of the Oriental world on the general subject. Accordingly, I shall insert in this place an extract from SIR WILLIAM JONES'S Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry (Chap. IX.), which exhibits the reasoning on both sides of the question in a very clear and satisfactory manner.

“Sunt igitur in linguis Asiaticis, ac praecipue Persica, carmina pœne innumerabilia, quorum idem est argumentum unusque fere perpetuus tenor. Nempe in iis continua serie laudantur amores ac deliciæ, voluptates, vina, odores, ludi, convivia; et reliqua quæ sensibus blandiuntur: accedunt humanæ pulchritudinis lætæ admodum descriptiones; intexuntur loci illi communes, de fortunæ temeritate, de honorum ac falsæ religionis contemtione; incertos esse rerum humanarum eventus, et brevem lucis ac vitæ usuram; amoris autem suavitates celeriter deflorescere; oportere igitur voluptates, dum licet, rapere, et

—— ποιεῖν τε οἷς γόνυ χλωρόν

nihil enim esse amore suavius, nihil quod magis hominem deceat. Exponuntur etiam eæ quæ in amore insunt variæ perturbationes, dolor, ægritudo, desiderium, spes, lætitia; nunc amator absens lan-



guet, dolet, illachrymat, nunc ob amicæ consortium vehementer exultat et triumphat. Hæc autem omnia describuntur mira sententiarum varietate, verborum elegantia, imaginum splendore, et translationum pulcherrimarum copia.

"Poetæ, qui horum carminum laude floruerunt, sunt innumeri; quorum tamen facile principatum obtinet ille, de quo jam dictum est, Hafez; cujus politissimum carmen, cum adumbratione Latina, idcirco hic apponam, ut horum carminum, de quibus sum proxime locutus, percipiatur natura:

"Puer, vini cyathum affer,

"Unum atque alterum vini puri cyathum affer.

"Remedium amoris ægritudinis, hoc est, vinum,

("Illud enim senum et juvenum medicina est) affer.

"Sol et luna sunt vinum et cyathus,

"In media luna solem affer.

"Illide ignem illum nobis liquidum,

"Hoc est, ignem illum aquæ similem affer.

"Si rosa transit, dic, vultu hilari

"Vinum purum tanquam aquam rosarum, affer.

"Strepitus lusciniæ si non manet, oportet

"Strepitum poculorum afferas.

"Ob temporum mutationes ne sis tristis, sed identidem

"Concentum citharæ et fidium affer.

"Congressum illius, nisi in somno, videre nequeo,

"Medicinam, (vinum) quæ somni origo sit, affer.

"Quod si ebrius sum, ecquid est remedii? alium calicem

"Ut prorsus sensibus destituar, affer.

"Unum atque alterum cyathum Hafezo da,

"Seu peccatum sit, seu factum laudabile, affer."

"Huic carmini aliud subijciam, idque in amatorio genere pulcherrimum, et venustis imaginibus unice constans:

"Ah! tota forma tua delicate fingitur, unusquisque locus ubi tu es,  
"dulcis est,

"Cor meum a dulci tua et mellea lascivia hilare est,

"Tanquam rosæ folium recens, natura tua lenis est,

"Tanquam horti æternitatis cupressus, ex omni parte suavis es.

"Dissimulatio et petulantia tua dulcis est, prima lanugo et nævus in  
"gena tua pulcher,

"Oculus et supercilium nitida sunt, statura tua et proceritas amabilis.

"Visus mei rosetum a te picturis et ornamentis plenum,

"Cordis mei odor a cincinnò tuo jasmineum habente odorem dulcis est.

"In amoris via a doloris torrente non est perfugium,

"At statum meum ob tuam amicitiam jucundum reddidi.

"Ante oculos tuos morior; at in illa ægritudine



"Ob genani tuam splendidam dolor meus dulcis sit.

"In deserto indagandi te tametsi undequaque periculum est ;

"Tamen Hafez corde destitutus, dum tuum adventum petit, tranquille

"procedit."

"De vera horum carminum significatione magna est opinionum diversitas. Alii proprium tantummodo sensum agnoscunt, alii reconditius quiddam in iis ac divinius censent delitescere. Audiamus itaque utriusque sententiæ defensores. Aiunt quidam animos humanos, in corporum vinculis et compagibus inclusos, eodem fere modo (sed longe vehementius) in divinum omnium rerum procreatorem affici, quo in amicas amatores ; nam ut amantes amicarum recordantur, si qua res eorum oculis obversetur, quæ aliquam habeat cum amato corpore cognationem, sic animas nostras vitæ superioris recordatione et desiderio languescere, si quando divinæ pulchritudinis adumbratam quandam effigiem videamus. Hunc autem amorem ita esse ardentem, ut ad insaniam quandam, et quasi *ἔκστασιν* accedat : et quoniam ea est mentium humanarum imbecillitas, ea sermonum, quibus utuntur homines, inopia, ut verbis ad hunc ardorem rite exponendum accommodatis careant, necesse est poetæ, cœlesti illo furore et divina permotione incitati, iis utantur imaginibus et verbis, quæ maximam habeant cum suis conceptibus affinitatem. Cum autem ii, qui divino amore inflammentur, tanquam ebrii, a mentis sensu abstrahantur, nihil aptius esse potest, quam ebrietatis imaginem ad hunc diviniorem rationis amissionem transferre. Hinc osculorum, hinc amplexationum, hinc deliciarum, atque amœnitatum omnium in Persarum carminibus descriptiones ortum habuerunt, quæ ad proprium sensum restringi nullo modo debent. Atque hoc ipsi poetæ satis aperte declarant ; sic Hafez,

"Ebrius est solummodo æterni fœderis amore,

"Is qui, more Hafezi, vinum purum bibit."

Et

"Jucundum cor sit illi, qui Hafezo similis

"Poculum vini æterni fœderis capiat."

Et alibi,

"Amoris ebrietas capiti tuo non inest ;

"Abi : tu enim succo uvarum ebrius es."

Et Sadi,

"Forsan unus amoris odor te inebriabit,

"Et faciet te fœdus divinum querere."

Sic etiam poeta Turcicus *Ruhi Bagdadi*,

"Noli putare nos uvæ succo ebrios esse,

"Nos eas tabernas colimus, ubi divini fœderis vino inebriemur."

"Hæc illi. Nunc prodeant ii qui huic sententiæ adversantur. Damus, inquit, hæc, si de translatione vel simplici vel etiam continuata loquamini; sed hæc translatio per longum poema perpetua serie deduci nullo pacto potest. Licet poetæ religioso dicere, se ad divinum numen accedere non minus ardentem cupere, quam amator amicam videre; sed non utique licet propriam notionem penitus dimittere, et imaginibus ab amore humano petitis per longissimum opus perpetuo uti. Id qui faciunt, ænigmata non versus scribere censendi sunt.

"Permuta enim imaginem: dulcissime certe et tenerrime inquit vates Hebræus,

"Velut cervus rivos aquarum ardentem desiderat,  
"Sic tui desiderio, Deus, anima mea flagrat."

Cuiquamne vero concederemus, ut continuo carmina perlonga coctexeret, in quibus de rivulis, de cervis, de sitis ægritudine, de herbarum amœnitate, de sylvis ac pratis solummodo loqueretur? Quæ autem narrant de anima nostra in corporis catenis inclusa, vitæque diviniore desiderio flagrante, et quæ sequuntur, ea fere sunt Platonica. At quidnam esse causæ putemus, cur Platonis viri gravissimi versiculos de Agathone, de Astere, de Dione, de Archianassa, nemo unquam extiterit, qui ad sensum reconditiorem interpretaretur; quæ vero poetæ Asiatici, homines, ut scimus, admodum voluptuarii, de amoribus ac deliciis scribunt, ea divina, ea pietatis plena, ea *μυστήριον* quoddam continere dicamus? Multa sunt a Græcis poetis, ac præsertim a Lyricis, et cogitata et scripta venustissime; quæ tamen nemo est nisi simpliciter et proprie interpretatus. Quid? sex illos elegantes versiculos, qui cum pœsi Persica mirifice congruunt,

*Ἐκμαίνει χεῖλη με ῥοδοχροα ποικιλόμυθα,  
Ψυχοτακῇ, στοματος νεκταρόν πρόθυρα,  
Καὶ γλῆναι λασίησιν ὑπ' ὀφρύσιν ἀστράπτουσαι,  
Σπλάγχνων ἡμετέρων δίκτυα, καὶ παγίδες,  
Καὶ μαζοὶ γλαγόμεντες, ἐνζυγες, ἡμερόεντες,  
Εὐφυνες, πάσης τερπνότεροι κάλυκος*

ad proprium sensum restringendos, nemo est qui non censeat: illos vero Hafezo versus,

"Capit vesica Sinensis odorem moschi ab illis crinibus,  
"Crines autem talem odorem ab illa gena recipiunt:  
"In terram demittitur cupressus lasciva ob illam staturam,  
"Pudore affecta sedet rosa horti ob illam genam:  
"Verecundans abit flos jasmini ob illud corpus,  
"Sanguinem stillat color floris purpurei (Argovan) ob illam genam."



"Hos, inquam, versus ad divinum nescio quid pertinere existimant. Quid? cum scribat Mimnermus, belle, ut solet,

*Τὶς δὲ βίος, τὶ δὲ τεργνὸν ἄνευ χρυσῆς Ἀφροδίτης;*

*Τεθναίνην, ὅτε μοι μηκέτι ταῦτα μέλοι,*

*Κρυπταδὴ φιλότης, καὶ μείλιχα δῶρα, καὶ εὐνή·*

quisquamne arbitratur poetam per *auream* illam *Venerem* per *dulcia amoris dona*, per *furtivos illos complexus*, pietatem et divinum amorem intelligere? Cur ideo putemus Mesihium, poetam Turcicum, cum dicat elegantissime,

"Ne me, Deus, in sepulchrum perducas,

"Donec amicæ meæ gremium amplexu teneam,"

quippiam reconditum aut cœleste innuisse? Quid? versus illos Hafezianos,

"Pulvinar in rosarium affer, ut pulchri pueri et ancillæ

"Labia premas, genas osculeris, et vinum bibas rosæ odore præditum:"

Et illos,

"A gena puellæ nymphæ similem habentis vultum,

"Tanquam Hafez, merum hauri:"

Et illum ardenti affectu plenum,

"Labium super labium pone, o vini ministra, et dulcem meam animam ebibe:" annon ad terrenos amores spectare consendum est?

"Quod si plura argumenta ex ipsis poetarum Asiaticorum carminibus depromenda sint, permulta proferre possimus exempla, quibus perspicuum sit Hafezo atque aliis, Mohammedem et ipsam religionem ludibrio fuisse; velut cum dicat,

"Acce illud (vinum) quod vir religiosus (Mohammedes) matrem pecca-

"torum vocitat,

"Optabilius nobis ac dulcius videtur quam virginis suavius:"

Et

"Nos vino puro amoris inebriamur,

"Fontes autem cœlestes (Salsebil et Cafur) non sitimus:"

Et alibi plus millies.

"Ac profecto satis intelligere nequimus, cur poetas credamus huiusmodi involucris ac tegumentis velle celare eas virtutes, quibus nihil laudabilius esse potest, pietatem ac Dei cultum; amores vero impudicos, et qui maxime humano generi dedecori sint, aperte profiteri. Multo certe verisimilius est, poetas illos, utcumque sensum quendam occultum innuere videantur, eo solum prætextu uti, ut cives suos credulos et religiosos decipiant, et voluptatibus liberius indulgeant. Ac ne ipsis quidem Persis, (doctoribus scilicet) Hafezi



carmina arcanam habere significationem visa sunt : nam Sudius, omnium eruditissimus interpretum, proprium tantum verborum sensum in illius versibus explicat. Præterea memoriæ proditum est, (illo poeta mortuo) primarios urbis Shirazi viros, sepulturam ei ob carminum impudicitiam concedere noluisse ; cum vero magna esset inter eos concertatio, aliis ut sepeliretur suadentibus, aliis vehementer dehortantibus, ad sortes se contulisse, et ipsius poetæ librum divinationis causa aperuisse ; cum autem primus, qui sese illis obtulit versus, esset,

“ Gressum noli retorquere ab Hafezi exequiis,

“ Tametsi enim peccatis demersus sit, in coelum intrabit ;”

sacerdotes illico consensisse, et poetam humavisse in illo loco, Mossella dicto, quem ipse in carminibus celebravisset. Ita disputant utriusque sententiæ propugnatores : equidem veterum Academicorum morem, nihil ut affirmem, strenue tenebo ; ita tamen ut non negem, quin mihi disputatio secunda ad veritatem propensior esse videatur.”

This subject will be resumed in the Notes on Lect. XXXI. S.

## NOTES ON LECTURE XII.

[A. p. 97.] ISAIAH XVII. 12, 13.

These five words, *לְאִמִּים בְּשָׂאוֹן זִמָּה בְּבִירִים וְשִׂאוֹן*, are wanting in seven manuscripts : in two of them, v. 12, for *בְּבִירִים* we read *רְבִים*. So also the Syriac version, which agrees with them. These five words are not necessary to the sense : and seem to be repeated only by the carelessness of the transcriber. KENNICOTT.

Crisin hanc Kennicotianam in hunc locum merito castigat DAV. KOCHERVS in Vindiciis S. Textus Hebraei Esaiæ Vatis adversus Roberti Lowthi Criticam (Bern. 1786. in octon.), p. 102. his verbis : “ Enimvero verborum phrasiumque repetitiones illae cum venustate, et gratia maiorem vim atque virtutem coniungunt, ut nihil inde tolli, locumque aliis similibus apud Esaiam repetitionibus defendendis enotari cupiam. Ecquis non laudat Virgiliana e. g. illa (Eclog. VII. 4) :

Ambo florentes aetatibus, Arcades ambo.

Et Ecl. x. 75.

Surgamus : solet esse gravis cantantibus umbra ;

Iuniperi gravis umbra, nocent et fragibus umbrae.

Et qualia de hoc genere multa conguessit Vossius, Rhetoricor. L. V. C. 3. Sed imprimis contulisse iuvabit Psalmos cxviii. cxxiv. aliosque. Adde locos Esai. xi. 5. xv. 8. xvi. 7. xl. 7. 8. lix. 10." Omnes quoque, praeter Syriacam, versiones veteres consentiunt in exprimendis illis verbis, quae hodiernum in codicibus innumeris repetita leguntur.

ROSENMUELLER.

[B. p. 100.] ISAIAH LV. 10, 11.

This passage of the prophet loses much of its poetical beauty if it be not rightly understood. He is not speaking of that *grace*, which the school divines treat of, and which has been celebrated since the time of Augustin in so many controversies, nor of the virtue and efficacy of the gospel in correcting the morals of mankind, but of the certain accomplishment of the prophetic word. It was very customary among the Hebrews to compare the word of God, and particularly the word of prophecy, to a shower of rain, Deut. xxxii. 2. Ezek. xxi. 2. Mic. ii. 6. Job xxix. 22, 23. When, therefore, it is their intention to describe the certain and inevitable accomplishment of the divine oracles, they represent the earth as impregnated and fertilized by this refreshing rain. Isaiah has celebrated in the xlth chapter, as well as in the chapter under our consideration, vs. 3, 4, and 5, the eternal covenant of God with the Israelites, and the accomplishment of that perpetual and permanent grace which he had sworn to David, namely, that an eternal and immortal King should sit upon his throne; and that he should rule and direct the heathen. If these should appear to any person above credibility, he advises him to recollect that the divine counsels are far above the reach of the human understanding; and that those things are easy to him, which appear most difficult to us. He adds, that the sacred oracles, however miraculous, will most assuredly be fulfilled; *that the word of God may be compared to snow or rain; which does not return to heaven, before it has performed its office of watering and fecundating the earth: so it is with the prophetic decrees, or the divine predictions of future events.* And in this light I understand the passage from the context, both from what precedes, and what follows. There is one similar in xlv. 8, but the idea is more condensed, assuming rather the form of a metaphor or allegory, than of a comparison.

"Rumpimini coeli desuper,

"Nubila fluant veritate.



"Pandat se terra, foecundent eam victoriis,  
"Veritasque cum illis propullulet."

In Arabic  $\text{صِدْق}$  signifies *truth*; and this sense of the word is very frequent in Isaiah, (see 41: 26, etc.). Also  $\text{יְשׁוּעָה}$ ,  $\text{יְשׁוּעָה}$ , and  $\text{תְּשׁוּעָה}$ , appropriately pertain to *victories*. (See 2 Kings 5: 1. 1 Sam. 14: 45. Isa. 19. 20. Obad. 21, etc.).

MICHAELIS.

Nomen  $\text{יְשׁוּעָה}$ , quod Ies. XLV. 8. legitur, ubique *salutem* in universum denotat, nec usquam, ut nomina  $\text{יְשׁוּעָה}$  et  $\text{תְּשׁוּעָה}$ , ad *victoriam* restringitur. Neque victoriae notio Iesaiano loco satis apta. Describitur seculi aurei felicitas, quo tota mundi machina sit renovanda. Iovae iussu nova et felicior totius naturae facies apparet; ita quidem, ut coelum serenum roret non aquarum guttas, uti nunc, sed virtutis et iustitiae semina, quae a terra sese aperiente excepta in ea primum germen, tum plantas saluberrimas salutis atque virtutis proferant.

ROSENMUELLER.

[C. p. 102.] PSALM LXXXIII. 13—15.

Between these two comparisons there exists so nice a relation, that they would from one simple comparison, were it not that the sententious distribution of the verses had disposed the subject in a different form and order. Their threshing-floors were so constructed in open situations, that when the corn was beaten out, the wind carried off the chaff and straw, which being collected together, was burnt. See Isai. v. 24. Matt. iii. 12. and HAMMOND'S *Com.* LOWTH.

The wicked are first compared to the chaff, which is driven before the whirlwind; and then their destruction is painted in a manner still more terrific, by comparing them to mountain forests in flames. (Compare Virgil, Aen. II. 304, 305. X. 495 seqq. Georg. II. 305—311; and Homer. II. XI. 155).

S.

[D. p. 103.] JOB VI. 17.

$\text{בָּצֵת זָרְבוּ נַצְמָתָהּ}$ . According to Rosenmueller and Gesenius, the verb  $\text{זָרַב}$ , like the Syriac  $\text{ܐܘܪܒ}$ , signifies *to become narrow*, *to be enclosed*; and they suppose the sense of the passage to be: *As soon as the streams are confined to their proper channels, (which they had overflowed in consequence of the thawing of the snow and ice), they pass away, or become dry.*

S.



## NOTES ON LECTURE XIII.

[A. p. 104.] *Personification.*

The passions of resentment and love have been very accurately traced by some late writers on the human mind, into the senses of pain and pleasure; the one arising from the habitual inclination to remove what is hurtful; the other from that of possessing what is a source of grateful sensations, and a means of increasing pleasure. (See HARTLEY on Man, and a Dissertation prefixed to KING's Origin of Evil). The strong expression of these passions is, however, chiefly directed to rational, or at least to animated beings; but this is the effect of reason and habit. The passions are still the same, and will frequently display themselves in opposition to reason. A child turns to beat the ground, or the stone, that has hurt him; (see LORD KAIMES's Elements of Criticism;) and most men feel some degree of affection even for the old inanimate companions of their happiness. From these dispositions originates the figure, which is the great and distinguishing ornament of poetry, the *prosopopœia*. This figure is nearly allied to the metaphor, and still more to the metonymy; it is to the latter, what the allegory is to the metaphor. Thus when we say—"Youth and beauty shall be laid in the dust," for persons possessing youth and beauty, it is hard to determine whether it be a metonymy or a *prosopopœia*. Lyric poetry, in which the imagination seems to have the fullest indulgence, and which abounds with strong figures, is most favourable to personification. GREGORY.

[B. p. 105.] ISAIAH XLVII. 1.

Sitting on the ground was a posture that denoted deep misery and distress. The prophet JEREMIAH has given it the first place among many indications of sorrow, in that elegant description of the distress of his country, (Lam. ii. 8.) 'The elders of the daughter of Sion sit on the ground, they are silent,' etc. 'We find Judea,' says Mr. ADDISON, (on Medals, Dial. ii.) 'on several coins of Vespasian and Titus, in a posture that denotes sorrow and captivity.—I need not mention her sitting on the ground, because we have already spoken of the aptness of such a posture to represent extreme affliction. I fancy the Romans might have an eye to the customs of the Jewish nation, as well as those of their country, in the several marks of sorrow they have set on this figure. The psalmist describes the Jews lamenting their captivity in the same pensive posture: 'By the

waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O Sion.' But what is more remarkable, we find Judea represented as a women in sorrow sitting on the ground, in a passage of the prophet, that foretels the very captivity recorded on this medal.' LOWTH.

[C. p. 108.] JUDGES v. 29, 30.

Nisi forte verti debet, *et ipsa* (mater Sisserae) *respondet illi*, feminae sapienti, se solanti. Est nemque in versu 30 elegans colloquii muliebris imitatio, matre Sisserae amplius aliquid semper sperante, quam virgines eius promiserant, earumque voces, tanquam nimis timidas corrigente. Virgines interrogant: *nonne invenient*—: interpellat mater: *divident spoliū*? quod plus morae habet. Illae: *puellam uterum gestantem pro viro*: haec: *imo binas puellas, gravidas*. Illae: *praedam versicolorem Sisserae*: haec: *imo praedam versicolorem acupictam, versicolorem, utrinque acupictam, pro collo captorum equorum*.

MICHAELIS.

Sed nos admodum veremur, ne regulis linguae contraria sit haec opinio quantumvis ingeniosa. Nam primo verbum *הַשִּׁיר*, si *respondere* significat, habere solet accusativum personae, cui respondetur (vid. Num. xxii. 8. Ios. xiv. 7. 2 Sam. iii. 11. xxiv. 13. 1 Reg. xii. 16. al.), neque vel unicus locus nobis constat, in quo constructum sit cum dativo. Obstat praeterea pronomen in *אֲמַרְיָה*, quia non dicitur *אֲמַרְיָה אוֹתוֹ הַשִּׁיר*, sed *הַשִּׁיר אוֹתוֹ אֲמַרְיָה*. Denique *זֶה* non recte refertur ad plures feminas sapientes, *הַחֲכָמוֹת*, sed absque omni dubio pertinere debet ad personam illam, quae loquens inducitur. Nostro igitur iudicio certus ac unice verus verborum sensus ille est, ipsam matrem Siserae sermones suos querulos *sibi revocasse*, retractasse, et quae sequuntur v. 30 verba esse solius matris, solatia comitum admittentis, atque nunc, quia facile creditur quod optatur, in laetissimam spem ac immodica fere gaudia effusae. C. F. SCHNURER *Carmen Deborahae Iud. V. in Dissertatt. Philologica Critt.* p. 87.

ROSENMUELLER.

For a beautiful translation of the Song of Deborah, see Herder, Briefe, Th. I. S. 105 ff.; and Geist, Th. II. S. 237 ff. See also Note A on Lect. XXVIII.

S.

[D. p. 110.] *Triumphal odes of the Hebrews.*

Nempe et hoc proprium ac privum est poetis Hebraeorum, ut medio carmini illud intexant sonantius iam et maius carmen, cui collata reliqua oratio paene prosa videtur; fingantque epinicion, aut epice-



dium, pro more gentis a poëtis mulieribusve canendum. Ies. xxvi. 1 seqq. xxvii. 2, 3, 4, 5. Ierem. ix. 16—20. Ezech. xxxii. 2 seqq. Cujus prosopopeiae mira vis est, tum quia magis videmur nobis in rem praesentem venire, ipsisque iam victoriis aut malis interesse, epinicia ista aut epicedia audientes: tum quod admirabilius quid ac divinius persentiscimus, cum reliqui carminis sensu iam adfecti maius aliud auribus haurimus. Quo in genere pro more suo novus est, illisque, quos imitatur, audacior Habacucus, II. 6 seqq. carmen ludicrum et acerbè laetum componens, quo Babylo[ni] gentes, duram antea expertae servitutem, insultabunt. Dignum illud, quod hic legeretur: sed servare eius explicationem liceat Collegio Critico in Habacucum, propediem edendo.

MICHAELIS.

Quod hic promittit Michaelis Collegium Criticum in Habacucum lucem nunquam vidit. Sed Habacuci nobilissimum carmen, quo gentes Babylo[ni] destructae insultantes inducuntur, apponere lubet ex Iac. Aug. Thuani paraphrasi poetica, eaque elegantissima, paucis tamen hodie cognita. Est vero talis:

Victorum sed mox populorum fabula fiet,  
Atque erit haec vulgi naenia in ore frequens.  
Vae late regi, quem non sua semper habendi  
Fervida inexhausto torret amore sitis.  
Nam quousque insultans grassabitur, et quasi glebas  
In cumulos densas coges iniquus opes?  
An dubitas quin mox, Babylon male conscia, surgant  
Qui rabido versa te vice dente petant,  
Quique tuos unctis lanient crudeliter artus  
Vnguibus, et rapiant quae tibi rapta prius?  
Te ditem exuviis aliorum fortior alter  
Exuet, exemplo cuncta feretque tuo.  
Quippe tibi sanguis effusus in urbe piorum,  
Vexati cives, vi populatus ager.  
Vae nimias quisquis privatae munimina sorti  
Sollicito studio condit avarus opes:  
Scilicet ut celsa nidum sibi figat in arce,  
Et procul hostileis rideat inde minas.  
Consilium, O Babylon, cepisti perfida rebus,  
Cuius te pudeat poeniteatque tuis.  
Totque trucidatis populis mens conscia facti  
Exagitat diro turbida corda metu.  
Namque age, magnificas alienis sumptibus aedeis,  
Ex spoliis pulcras extrue, praedo, domos;  
Tollenti gemitus lapidi lignum adstrepat ecce  
Adversum, querulos consociatque sonos.  
Vae tibi! per caedes quisquis fundamina magnae



Urbis, perque nefas aedificanda locas.  
 Nam Deus armipotens veniet, qui vota malorum  
 In ventum et rapidas ire iubebit aquas.  
 Qui facit ut populus, quasi qui secat ense favillam,  
 Affligat casso membra labore nocens.  
 Qui facit et celebri divina ubi gloria laude  
 Tollitur ut populum copia laeta beet,  
 Et iubare aethereo terram lux impleam omnem,  
 Implet ut aequoreos fluctibus unda sinus.  
 Vae! socio quisquis vinum cum felle propinas,  
 Et tentas sensus debilitasque caput,  
 Scilicet ut pateant cunctis reddenda iacentis  
 Membra verecundo iussa pudore tegi.  
 Tu quoque laude tumens et laetis ebris rebus  
 Triste ignominiae dedecus inde feres.  
 Namque et vina bibes, et nudus membra iacebis,  
 Et de te dignus vindice risus erit.  
 Ipse Deus propria miscebit pocula dextra,  
 E calice et fundet tristia masta suo:  
 Nec non et male sumpta vomes, vomituque probrose  
 Inficies partum pulcra per arma decus.  
 Te Libani adfecti colles, te lapsus iniquo  
 Obruet exesi pondere montis apex,  
 Foetaeque lustra feris desertorumque locorum  
 Praesentem incutiet tristis imago metum.  
 Nempe quod effusus Solyma tibi sanguis in urbe,  
 Vis facta indigenis, et populatus ager.  
 Atque in figmentis quae spes? quid sculptile prodest  
 Conflatum artificii numen inane manu?  
 Quaeve adeo spes esse potest in imagine falsa,  
 Aut quae vis in eo, qui simulacra facit?  
 Vae! quisquis ligno ad surdas miser occinit aureis,  
 Surge, aut qui lapides evigilare iubet.  
 Mutane te doceant vitaeque carentia sensu  
 Arcanos sensus saxea signa Dei?  
 Vndique quamquam auro circumlita, quamquam argento  
 Auro tamen blando nulla calore fovet.  
 At Dominus coeli residens super ardua templa  
 Hinc notat aeternis omnia luminibus.  
 Illius adspectu lucis stet pontus et aër,  
 Et tacito stupeat territa terra metu.

Legitur haec paraphrasis in libro qui inscribitur: *As fatidicus, sive Duodecim Prophetarum minores Latina metaphrasi poetica expositi partim a IACOBO AUGUSTO THVANO, Senatus Parisiensis Praeside, partim a CYNRADO RITTERSHYSIO IC. et Antecessore Academiae Noricae.* Ambergae, 1604. 8. p. 215 seqq. ROSENMUELLER.

## NOTES ON LECTURE XIV.

[A. p. 116.] JOB III. 3.

Our author exaggerates a little the boldness and energy of this passage, conceiving that to be an unusual phraseology, which is only uncommon to us. There will be an opportunity of mentioning the *change* or *enallage* of the tenses in the next Lecture. The ellipsis of the relative pronoun *וְשֶׁנָּא* (which) is not at all harsh and unusual; nothing is more common in the Arabic, it being accounted among the elegancies of language, nor is it unusual with the Hebrews. Even with the English, the pronoun *which* is very frequently omitted.

MICHAELIS.

[B. p. 116.] *Job and Jeremiah compared.*

"Egregie et verissime observatum. Iobi est tragica illa et regia tristitia, dicam, an desperatio: Ieremiae flebiles elegi, misericordiam provocantes, nec lacrimis maior luctus. Quod ut toto orationis colore facile agnoscent poetico sensu non destituti: ita magis tamen lucet, et exotericis etiam explicari potest, ubi in eandem uterque imaginem incidit. Repetant, quaeso, lectores, iterumque degustent comparationem amicorum Iobi cum rivo perfido, cuius versionem noster pag. 103 dedit: eiusque haustu ac tanquam spiritu pleni, ad elegantes, lugubres, sed exiles accedant Ieremiae elegos, xv. 18.

" Quare est dolor meus perpetuus,

" Et vulnus meum intractabile,

" Refugiens medelam!

" Factus es mihi, ut fons deficiens,

" Vt aquae non fidae!"

Versionem, in nonnullis novam, ne gratis sumere videar, moneo, primo, *אֲנִי* proprie *mollitiem* significare, ex Arabico *أنث*: mollia autem vulnera esse, adeo aegre ac dolorifica, ut manum medicam non admittant: deinde, non opus esse, ut *אֲבִירָא* iniurie in Deum ac rustice, *mendacem* simpliciter vertamus, sed fontis mendacis, seu aestate deficientis, significatum vocabulo commode tribui posse, nostro loco aptissimum. Confer enim phrasin Ies. LVIII. 11. Atque haud scio, an a fonte aut rivo, hibernis imbribus aucto, sed per aestatem deficiente, Ecdippae urbi, *אֲבִירָא* Hebraice, nomen ductum sit, idemque illi acciderit, quod permultis urbibus, ut a situ, loci ingenio, rivo, fonte, monte, nomen sortiantur.

MICHAELIS.

## NOTES ON LECTURE XV.

[A. p. 124.] *Paronomasia.*

In Isa. x. 30, the epithet *נְזִירָהּ* is applied *נְזִירָהּ* in allusion to the meaning or etymology of the name: as if the prophet had said:

"Ah! nimis ex vero nunc tibi nomen erit."

I would remark here, that if the reader desires to understand how much the prophets, and particularly Isaiah, are attached to beauties of this kind, he may be satisfied by consulting the following passages. Isa. v. 7. xiii. 6. xxiv. 17. xxvii. 7. xxxiii. 1. lvii. 6. lxi. 3. lxv. 11, 12. Jer. li. 2. Ezek. vii. 6. Hos. ix. 15. Amos v. 5. Mic. i. 10—15. Zeph. ii. 4. See also Gen. ix. 27. xlix. 8, 16, 19.

LOWTH.

Paronomasia is a favourite figure among all the Oriental poets, and their taste for it might have originated in part from the aid it gives to the memory; as most of their early poetry was necessarily preserved by oral tradition. Some mnemonic expedient of this sort is found in the early poetry of all nations. Our taste on such subjects is very much a matter of habit; and the paronomasia of some of the old English divines can appear no more puerile to us, than rhyme, (which we approve in the most elevated style of poetry), would appear to the poets of Greece and Rome. Indeed, rhyme is nothing more nor less than a regular recurrence of paronomasia, and if we are not offended by it in such productions as Pope's translation of the *Iliad* or Spencer's *Fairy Queen*, we can have little reason, on the ground of taste, to condemn paronomasia in the writings of the Hebrew prophets. This figure is sometimes used by the purest of the Latin writers, as in Virgil,

"Discolor unde auri per ramos aura refulsit;"

and Cicero against *Verres*, "quod nunquam hujusmodi *everriculum* in provincia ulla fuit." Consult the article on paronomasia in Professor Stuart's *Hebrew Grammar* (§§. 570, 571. 3d edit.); and Sir Wm. Jones's *Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry*, (Chap. VIII.) S.

[B. p. 127.] *Use of tenses in Hebrew.*

Though many of the remarks of Lowth on this very difficult subject are valuable, and merit attentive consideration; yet I very much doubt whether they can all be sustained by an accurate investigation of particulars. Michaelis says, and not without reason, "in his, quae de temporum forma grammatica disputat Noster, nimis ar-



gutus fit emphasium captator : multo sensurus aliter, si de grammatica Hebraica, non ex Latina, sed ex Arabica iudicasset." The Orientals, generally, allow themselves much more freedom in the use of tenses than the writers of the Western world. Consult Stuart's Heb. Gram. (§§ 501—504, 3d ed.); and S. de Sacy, Gram. Arab. (P. I. Sec. 333 ff.) The following remarks of Rosenmueller are also deserving of attention.

"Res facillime expediri videtur observatione Iahnii (Grammat. Ling. Hebr. p. 211. edit. tert.), quemadmodum Hebraeorum Aoristus primus, quem Praeteritum appellare solent, sistat *rem perfectam*, iam praesentem, iam praeteritam, iam futuram, ita Hebraeorum Aoristum secundum, Futurum vulgo vocant, dici de *re infecta*, iam futura, iam praesenti, iam praeterita, adeoque hanc flexionem comprehendere nostrum Futurum, Praesens et Imperfectum : id quod commode illustrat eo quod refert Varro, de Lingua Lat. L. VIII. p. 152. seq. et L. IX. p. 172. T. I. edit. Bipont., suo aevo omnes verborum Latinorum flexiones relatas fuisse ad duas, alteram rei inchoatae seu infectae (Futurum, Praesens, Imperfectum), alteram rei perfectae (Praeteritum exactum, Praesens exactum, Futurum exactum). Pro tribus cuiusque classis flexionibus Hebraei, Arabes et Aramaei habent unicam ; pro secunda classe Aoristum primum, sive Praeteritum, et pro prima classe Aoristum secundum, sive Futurum."

S.

### NOTES ON LECTURE XVI.

[A. p. 132.] ISAIAH XL. 12.

Non huius loci sunt, quae Iesaias versu 12 habet. Nec enim potentiam Dei, creationemque rerum omnium describit, sed hanc promittit sententiam : non magis nos mortali ingenio consilia Dei, quaeque praedicturus iam sit, assequi et investigare posse, quam aquam omnem pugillis, caelum palmo metiri, etc. MICHAELIS.

[B. p. 133.] PSALM CXXXIX. 7—10.

I am not perfectly satisfied with the commonly received interpretation of the 9th verse ; as expressive of the continual motion from East to West, and the velocity of the motion compared with that of the sun's rays. I look upon the two lines of this distich to be in contrast or opposition to each other, and not that the latter is

a consequence of the former ; and this I think is so apparent from the very construction of the sentences, that there cannot remain a doubt concerning it : Thus there is a double transition spoken of, towards the East, and again towards the West ; and the length of the flight, and not the velocity of the motion, is the object of amplification. Thus THEODORET upon this passage, "He calls the East *the Morning*, and the West, *the extreme parts of the Sea* : to height and depth he opposes breadth and length, describing and evincing the infinity of the Divine Being."

LOWTH.

The author of a very useful collection of Jewish commentaries, the title of which is *Miclat Jophe*, says, this phrase, *If I take the wings of the Morning*, should be understood as a common Oriental phrase for *departure* or *flight towards the East*. These are his words, *If I take the wings of the Morning, and fly with them ; i. e. If I go to the extremity of the East*.

HUNT.

Obstat Lowthi explicationi, facitque pro vocalibus Hebraicis ; quod indecens est, hominem implumem dicere : *si alas meas attollerem*. Aliud est : si alas, quales sunt Aurorae, attollerem.

MICHAELIS.

Attulit Huntius prima tantummodo interpretis Hebraici verba, Lowthianae explicationis confirmandae gratia. Sed erat Scholion Hebraicum integrum apponendum, ex quo apparet, illum Lowtho minime favere. En verba Hebraea, quae statim excipiunt illa ab Huntio allata : וְאַחֲרֵיתָם הוּא הַמַּעֲרָב וְאָמַר בְּאַחֲרֵיתָם הֵם רֹצֵחַ לֹמֵר סוֹף הָעוֹלָם כְּלוּמָר אֵם אֵלֶּךְ מִמּוֹרָח לְהַעֲרֵב בְּרֹגַע אֶחָד לֹא אוֹכֵל לִלְכֹּת בְּלֶחֶד כִּי בָכָל מָקוֹם תִּנְחַנִּי יָדְךָ וְהִאֲחֻזִּי יָמִינְךָ. *Et extremum maris est occidens ; et quod dicit : in extremo maris, significare voluit ultimam mundi plagam, quasi diceret ; si eam ab oriente ad occasum uno momento, neque tamen possim abire in locum, quo tu non adsis ; nam ubique manus tua ducit me, et dextera tua me apprehendit*. In qua quidem interpretatione, quum sensum idoneum fundat, et nos acquiescendum arbitramur.

ROSENMUELLER.



## NOTES ON LECTURE XVII.

[A. p. 140.] *Pathos of the Scriptures.*

Every attentive reader of the sacred writings, who has a taste for excellence of the kind here alluded to, and has observed how deeply our best poets, Milton, Pope, and even Shakspeare, are indebted to the Bible for some of their loftiest flights of sublimity and most exquisite touches of pathos, will at once acknowledge the justness of Lowth's remarks on this point. And if, as we believe, the Bible was really given by inspiration of God, if it was in fact dictated by the Spirit of Him who formed the heart of man and is most intimately acquainted with all its intricacies; why should it not contain the most perfect delineation of the human passions and character, that has ever been given? *He that formed the eye, shall he not see?* A thorough investigation and complete exhibition of the excellence of the Bible in this respect, is a *desideratum* in Sacred Literature. Niemeyer, in his *Charakteristik der Bibel*, has accomplished something in this branch of biblical study; but a treatise is needed more condensed, and more directly to the point. The task should be performed by one in whom the refined taste and intellectual vigour of Lowth are united with the nicest discernment, and most extensive philological attainments. Such a work would be an invaluable accession to the science of human nature in general; and would be to the student of sacred eloquence a help in his pursuit as much superior to the systems of rhetoric now extant, as a faithful digest of the moral precepts of the New Testament would be to all human systems of ethics. S.

[B. p. 142.] ISAIAH LXIII. 6. וְאֶרְוִי לְאֶרֶץ נִצָּחִים.

Vertendum potius: *ad terram deturbavi robur, fortitudinem, eorum.* נִצָּחִים Iarchi recte explicat גְּבוּרַת נִצְחֹנָם, *fortitudinem victoriae, potentiae, eorum.* Nec non Kimchi: חֹזֶק וְהִקְפָּחָם *fortitudinem et potentiam eorum.* Hieronymus: *detraxi in terram virtutem eorum.* Chaldaeus: וְאֶרְוִי לְאֶרֶץ אֶרֶץ־קִטְיָה גְּבוּרֵיהֶן *deiei ad terram infimam occisos fortium eorum.* Syrus: *وَأَرْوِي دُونَ دُونَ*, et *deiei in terram robur eorum.* Alexandrinus Graecus interpres נִצָּח h. 1. *de sanguine, in quo vis vitalis est, accepit, vertit enim: καὶ κατήγαγον τὸ αἷμα αὐτῶν εἰς γῆν.*

ROSENMUELLER.



## NOTES ON LECTURE XVIII.

[A. p. 147.] *Jewish opinions on Hebrew poetry.*

ABARBANEL distinguishes three species of canticles. The first is the rhythmical, or that with similar endings; in use among the more modern Hebrews (who learned it from the Arabic writers) but which was certainly unknown to the authors of the Holy Scriptures. The second was adapted to music, and sung either alone or accompanied with instruments: such are the songs of Moses, of Deborah, of David. The third species consists of parables, or proverbs, which species, says he, (though by the way absurdly enough, as is not uncommon with the Rabbinical writers) is properly denominated קִיָּץ. From this class, however, he excludes the parables of the prophets, according to the distinction of Maimonides between prophecy and the Holy Spirit. (See More Neboc. ii. 45.) He says they are not canticles, because they are not the work of the prophet himself, but the mere effect of the prophetic inspiration. Mantissa Dissert. ad Libr. COSMI, page 413.

"It cannot be doubted that the canticles of the second species were possessed of a certain melody or metre, which through the length of the captivity, is obsolete." ABARBANEL, ib. 410.

The Song of Solomon is indeed allowed by the Jews to be a poem; not however from the nature of the composition, or from its being metrical, but merely because it is of the parabolic kind: and therefore it is referred by ABARBANEL to the third species of canticle. Whence it happens that, though in some manuscript copies the three metrical books are written in a versified form, the Lamentations and Song of Songs are differently transcribed. This I have observed to be the case with the Vatican MSS. which is deservedly accounted one of the most ancient, its date being the year DCCCCLXXIX of our Christian era. The same is observable in many other MSS. as I have been informed by my learned friend, Dr. KENNICOTT, whose Hebrew Bible with the various readings is now in the press, and already in great forwardness. Indeed, it is natural to suppose, that when the Jews exhibit certain canticles, and even whole books, in a poetical or versified order, they followed, or pretended to follow, the true nature of the Hebrew verse, or the proper distribution of the lines. But the great disagreement between them in this respect is a proof of their ignorance, for they seldom agree with one another

in the termination of the lines, or follow any determinate rule in this matter. The distribution of the verses is different in different copies, as may be immediately observed on comparing them. In the Song of Moses, DEUT. xxxii. in which the different editions agree better than in any other, (and indeed there was but little room for disagreement, the sense always pointing out of itself the order of the sentences) in this, notwithstanding, the Rabbins have contrived to differ, some of them dividing it into 67, and some into 70 verses or lines. See Annot. ad Bib. Heb. Edit. MICHAELIS, Halæ, 1720. Among the manuscript copies of the metrical books the disagreement is equally manifest, as the above excellent critic proved upon a very strict examination, undertaken at my request. In a very famous MSS. which I saw in the royal library at Dresden, I remarked a circumstance that clearly demonstrates the perfect ignorance and absurdity of the Jews in this respect. The Chaldee paraphrase was intermingled with the text throughout, in such a manner, that we first read the Hebrew, and then the Chaldee, verse by verse alternately: in the metrical books, which were divided into lines or verses, the text and version were so confounded, that the writer, attending only to the equality of his lines, perpetually blended the Hebrew and Chaldee together in such a manner, that where the one ended the other was resumed, and every line partook of both. This is a very elegant copy, and probably five hundred years old. The punctuation is evidently of a more recent date; as in that of the Vatican above-mentioned, and in some other copies still older.

LOWTH.

[B. p. 149.] *Schools of the prophets.*

Of the existence of such institutions there can be no doubt, (compare 2 Kings 6: 1—7); though the notices of them in the sacred history are so slight and transient, that little can be gathered respecting their discipline and course of instruction, additional to what our author has stated in the text. For some very interesting speculations on the subject, see Herder, *Geist*, (Th. II. S. 284 ff.), and Eichhorn, *Einleitung*, (Th. V. S. 1 ff.) I. C. C. Nachtigall has given the subject a more thorough investigation in an Essay, *ueber Samuels Saengerversammlung oder Prophetenschule*, in Henke's *Magazin fuer Exegese, Religionsphilosophie und Kirchengeschichte*, (Th. VI. Fasc. I. S. 38).

S.

[C. p. 150.] *Meaning of נִבְּיָה.*

This word, which according to its etymology means *an oracular saying*, *λογιον*, is no more peculiar to predictions of future events, than to every species of that eloquence which is supposed to come by inspiration, including that which teaches the salutary principles of moral conduct. I do not therefore see much force in this argument of our author : for whatever Lemuel composed under the influence of the Divine Spirit might properly be called נִבְּיָה whether in verse or not. The word is derived from נִבְּיָה he raised, he produced, he spoke ; not as some of the old commentators derive it, from נִבְּיָה he received. Though a divine oracle might, I confess, take its name with great propriety from *receiving*, as does the Greek word *λήμματα* (so the Seventy render this very phrase) which means being *received* from God. But the use of the word in 2 Kings ix. 25, militates against this derivation.

MICHAELIS.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE XIX.

[A. p. 156.] *Singing by alternate choirs.*

Though the performance of the hymns by two *alternate* CHOIRS, were the more usual, it evidently was not the only mode : for, as the parallelism of sentences in the Hebrew poetry is not restricted to distichs, but admits a varied form of iteration, so their psalmody, though usually confined to two alternate choruses, was sometimes extended to more. An example of the latter kind will appear in Ps. cxxxv. which was obviously performed by THREE *different* CHOIRS, the High Priest with the House of Aaron constituting the *first* ; the Levites serving in the temple, the *second* ; and the congregation of Israel, the *third* ; all having their *distinct* parts, and all at stated intervals *uniting* in full chorus.

The High Priest, accompanied by the rest of the priesthood, began with addressing the Levites :

Praise ye Jah !

The Levites return the exhortation to the priests :

Praise ye the name Jehovah !

The Priests and Levites then joining, address the congregation :

Praise him, O ye servants of Jehovah !

The Congregation address the Priests—

Ye that stand in the house of Jehovah !



## And the Levites—

In the courts of the house of our God!

This may be considered as the first passus of the *προσῳδα*, which the *Choir of Priests* resumes by a second exhortation to the *Levites*, and assigning the reason for their praise:

Praise ye Jah, for Jehovah is good.

The Levites then exhort the Congregation:

Sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant.

And the congregation joining both, the three choirs unite in full chorus:

For Jah hath chosen Jacob unto himself:

Israel for his peculiar treasure.

The *προσῳδα* thus concluding, the *high priest*, followed by his band, commences in the 5th verse the hymn. The 6th verse belongs to the *Levites*, and the 7th to the *Congregation*, both of whom having, in them, celebrated Jehovah, as the *Creator* and *Governor* of the world, the *high priest* descends in the 8th verse to the interpositions of Jehovah in behalf of his chosen people; beginning with the miracle that procured their deliverance from bondage. The *Levites* having adverted to the other miracles wrought in Egypt, in the former clause of the 9th verse, and the *Congregation*, in the latter, pointed out Pharaoh and his servants, as those upon whom the judgements of Jehovah were inflicted, the *high priest*, etc. proceeds in the 10th verse to remark the extension of similar judgements to other nations and kings, whose names and kingdoms the *Levites* enumerate, in the 11th verse, whilst the *Congregation*, in the 12th, commemorate the blessings which had thence resulted to them. At the close of this recitative, in the first clause of the 13th verse, follows a chorus of the priests:

Thy name, O Jehovah! endureth for ever!

And in the second, another of the Levites:

Thy memorial, O Jehovah! throughout all generations.

The Congregation then striking in with Priests and Levites, all unite in full chorus, as before:

For Jehovah will judge his people:

And will repent him concerning his servants.

This chorus may be considered as closing the first part of the hymn, the concluding clause of which, adverting to the frequent backslidings of the Jewish nation, notwithstanding the blessings both *ordinary* and *extraordinary* which Jehovah had conferred upon them, and the prosperity they enjoyed in the land promised to their

forefathers, notwithstanding their turning aside to the idolatry of the nations that had been cut off from before them, the choir of *priests* (referring back to the 5th verse) as if assured that Israel could revolt no more, breaks out in a second recitative, expressive at once of exultation and contempt :

The idols of the heathen, silver and gold, etc.

To this the Levites add in the same indignant strain :

They have mouths, but they speak not, etc.

The Congregation subjoin :

They have ears, but they hear not, etc.

And the three choirs again uniting :

They that make them are like unto them :

Every one that trusteth in them.

With this exquisite contrast between the gods in whom the heathen confided, and Jehovah the rock of their salvation—the former unable to aid or hear their votaries, and the latter loading benefits on his own—the second part of the hymn is concluded, and the *high priest* with his choir, by a graceful transition, renews his exhortation as at first ; but now addressing the Congregation :

Bless Jehovah, O house of Israel !

To which the Congregation reply :

Bless Jehovah, O house of Aaron !

The *priests*, in like manner, exhorting the Levites :

Bless Jehovah, O house of Levi !

To whom they in their turn rejoin :

Ye that fear Jehovah, bless Jehovah !

All then uniting :

Blessed be Jehovah out of Sion !

Who dwelleth in Jerusalem !

The whole is closed by each choir in full chorus, exhorting the other two :

Praise ye Jah !

From this analysis it is evident, that the Hebrew hymn is a composition not less regular than the Grecian ode, and of a much more varied nature than the professor had led his audience to suppose.

The whole Psalm, according to the above division, may be thus exhibited :

### *ΠΡΟΛΟΓΟΣ*, or PRELUDE. Part I.

High Priest and Priests, to the Levites :

Praise ye Jah !

Levites, to the Priests :

Praise ye the name of Jehovah !

Priests and Levites, to the Congregation :

Praise him, O ye servants of Jehovah !

The Congregation, to the Priests :

Ye that stand in the house of Jehovah !

The Congregation, to the Levites :

In the courts of the house of our God !

### ΗΡΟΑΣΜΑ. 2.

Priests, to the Levites :

Praise ye Jah, for Jehovah is good !

Levites, to the Congregation :

Sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant.

Congregation, joining both Priests and Levites :

For Jah hath chosen Jacob unto himself,  
Israel for his peculiar treasure.

### HYMN.

High Priest, followed by the Priests :

For I know that Jehovah is great,  
Even our Lord above all gods.

Levites :

Whatsoever Jehovah pleased,  
He did in heaven, and in earth,  
In the seas, and in deep places :

Congregation :

He causeth the vapours to rise from the ends of the earth,  
He maketh lightnings for the rain :  
He bringeth the wind out of his treasures.

High Priest, accompanied by the Priests :

Who smote the first-born of Ægypt,  
Both of man, of beast.

Levites :

Sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Ægypt ;

Congregation :

Upon Pharaoh and upon all his servants.

High Priest and Priests :

Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings :

Levites :

Sihon, king of the Amorites,  
And Og, king of Basan,  
And all the kingdoms of Canaan.



**Congregation :**

And he gave their land an heritage,  
An heritage with Israel his people.

**Priests :**

Thy name, O Jehovah, endureth for ever.

**Levites :**

Thy memorial, O Jehovah, throughout all generations.

**Priests, Levites, and Congregation, in full chorus :**

For Jehovah will judge his people ;  
And will repeat him concerning his servants.

**II.****High Priest, accompanied by the Priests :**

The idols of the heathen—silver and gold !  
The work of mortal hands.

**Levites :**

They have mouths, but they speak not ;  
Eyes have they, but they see not.

**Congregation :**

They have ears, but they hear not :  
Neither is there any truth in their mouths.

**Priests, Levites, and Congregation, in full chorus :**

They that make them are like unto them ;  
Every one that trusteth in them.

*Ἀντιφωνεῖς.***High Priest and Priests, to the Congregation :**

Bless Jehovah, O house of Israel !

**Congregation, to the High Priest and Priests :**

Bless Jehovah, O house of Aaron !

**High Priest and Priests, to the Levites :**

Bless Jehovah, O house of Levi !

**Levites, to High Priest and Priests :**

Ye that fear Jehovah, bless Jehovah !

**Priests, Levites, and Congregation, in full chorus :**

Blessed be Jehovah out of Sion,  
Who dwelleth in Jerusalem !

**Full chorus, continuing each division to both the rest :**

Praise ye Jah !

The praising the name **JEHOVAH**, so often mentioned in Scripture, arises from the answer to the question of Moses, **Exod. iii. 13.**

**HENLEY.**

(Compare also Herder, Geist, Th. II. S. 126 ff.)

[B. p. 158.] HOSEA XI. 9.

There is hardly any thing in which translators have differed more than in the explanation of this line ; which is the more extraordinary when we consider that the words themselves are so well known, and the structure of the period so plain and evident. JEROME is almost singular in his explanation. Comm. in loc. "I am not one of those who inhabit cities ; who live according to human laws ; who think cruelty justice." CASTALIO follows JEROME. There is in fact in the latter member of the sentence לֹא אֲבִיָּא בְּעִיר a parallelism and synonyme to לֹא אִישׁ in the former. The future אֲבִיָּא has a frequentative power (see Ps. xxii. 3 and 8,) "I am not accustomed to enter a city ; I am not an inhabitant of a city." For there is a beautiful opposition of the different parts ; "I am God, and not man ;" this is amplified in the next line, and the antithesis a little varied. "I am thy God, inhabiting with thee, but in a peculiar and extraordinary manner, not in the manner of men." Nothing I think can be plainer or more elegant than this. LOWTH.

[C. p. 166.] *Use of parallelism in interpretation.*

A more full account of the Hebrew parallelism may be found in Dr. Lowth's Preliminary Dissertation to Isaiah, which the reader will do well to consult. A very able tract on the use of parallelism in interpretation has been published by Dr. Schleusner, entitled : *Dissertatio Philologica de Parallelismo Sententiarum Egregio Subsidio Interpretationis Grammaticae Vet. Test.* Some useful remarks on the same subject may be found in Meyer, *Hermenetik des alten Testaments*, (Th. II. SS. 352—362). This investigation, however, belongs rather to a *Treatise on Hermeneutics* than to *Lectures on Poetry* ; and for this reason I omit the long, and in some respects valuable, note of Michaelis *de usu parallelismi membrorum hermeneutico*. The student who wishes for information on this point, will find it by consulting the works mentioned above. S.

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#### NOTES ON LECTURE XX.

[A. p. 168.] *Jewish notions of prophecy.*

Our author in this place alludes to the Rabbinical notions concerning inspiration, which are explained more at large by BASNAGE. "They distinguish," says that author, "eleven degrees of prophecy.

They reckon among inspired men those who felt some inward emotions, urging them to perform extraordinary actions, as Samson. Those who composed hymns and psalms, because they believed themselves inspired with God's Spirit, were accounted so many prophets. However, these prophets are distinguished from the following orders: 1. When Zechariah says, *the word of the Lord came unto me*. 2. Samuel heard a voice, but did not see who spoke. 3. When a man speaks in a dream with a prophet, as it happened to Ezekiel, to whom a man cried, *Son of man*. 4. Angels spoke often in dreams. 5. It was sometimes thought, that God himself spoke in a dream. 6. Some mystical objects were discovered. 7. An audible voice was heard from the midst of these objects. 8. A man is seen speaking, as it happened to Abraham under the oak of Mamre, which however was a vision. 9. Lastly, an angel is perceived speaking. Thus Abraham heard one, when he was binding Isaac upon the altar to sacrifice him: but that was also a vision." Hist. of the Jews, B. IV. ch. xviii. § 11.

GREGORY.

[B. p. 168.] *Style of Daniel unpoetical.*

We may add [to the causes of this mentioned by Lowth] the decline of the Hebrew language, which in the Babylonish captivity lost all its grace and elegance. Nor among so many evils which befell their nation, is it surprising that they should have neither leisure nor spirit for the cultivation of the fine arts. Besides, when a language is confined chiefly to the lowest of the people, it is hardly to be expected that it should produce any poets worthy of the name. Let any man compare what was written in Hebrew before and after the Babylonish exile, and I apprehend he will perceive no less evident marks of decay and ruin than in the Latin language. Wherefore it appears to me very improbable, that any psalms, which breathe a truly sublime and poetical spirit, were composed after the return from Babylon, excepting perhaps that elegant piece of poetry the cxxxviii. Certainly nothing can be more absurd than the error, into which some commentators have fallen, in attributing some of the sublimest of the psalms to Ezra, than whose style nothing can be meaner or more ungraceful. Indeed I have myself some doubts concerning the cxxxviii, which I am more inclined to attribute to Jeremiah, or some contemporary of his; and I think the taste and spirit of the bard, who sung so sweetly elsewhere the miseries of his nation, may very plainly be discerned in it.

MICHAELIS.



[C. p. 169.] *Design of prophecy.*

One of the most important ends of prophecy, as it appears to me, is, that the predictions, being gradually accomplished from age to age, may remain an attestation of the divine inspiration of the sacred writers, after the power of working miracles has ceased. In order to accomplish this purpose, the predictions must be sufficiently circumstantial and definite to afford satisfactory evidence that they were originally designed to be applicable to this or that particular event, and to no other.

Concerning the next feature of prophecy, which our author introduces, namely, *its comprehending at a single glance a variety of events*, etc., a valuable dissertation by Velthusen, entitled : *Programma de optica Rerum futurarum Descriptione ad illustrandum Locum Jes. LXXIII.* 1—6, may be found in the *Commentationes Theologicae*, published by Velthusen, Kuinoel, and Rupert, (Vol. VI. p. 75. ff.) S.

[D. p. 174.] ISAIAH XXXIV. XXXV.

In this prophecy Edom is particularly marked out as an object of the Divine vengeance. The principal provocation of Edom was their insulting the Jews in their distress, and joining against them with their enemies the Chaldeans : See Amos i. 11. Ezek. xxv. 12. xxxv. 15. Ps. cxxxvii. 7. Accordingly the Edomites were, together with the rest of the neighbouring nations, ravaged and laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar : See Jer. xxx. 15—26. Mal. i. 2, 3, 4 ; and see MARSHAM, Can. Chron. Sæc. xviii., who calls this the age of the destruction of cities.

LOWTH.

The course of thought is as follows : Jehovah is angry with all the heathen nations, and devotes them to destruction, (xxxiv. 1—4). In the first place, he sends his sword upon Edom, and causes a massacre in Bozra, in order to avenge Zion upon her, (vs. 5—8). The whole region is given to the flames, (vs. 9, 10). Nothing but beasts of the wilderness and goblins shall dwell there forever, (vs. 11—17).

The oppressed nation of Israel rejoice in this destruction of their enemies, and see in it a proof of the power of Jehovah, (xxxv. 1, 2). Comforted and happy, they now have opportunity to return to their native land, (vs. 3—6) ; for Jehovah himself will lead them through the wilderness, make it fruitful, supply it with water, and free it

from wild beasts, (vs. 6—9). Redeemed and shouting for joy they will march to Jerusalem, (v. 10). GESENIUS.

The general view of this noble poem, which Lowth has given in the text, is truly admirable; but his exegesis of some of the parts is, to say the least, very questionable. The Bishop gives way too much to his old propensity to *emend the text* where he finds a difficulty. Instead of entering into a minute examination here, I would refer the reader to his Hebrew Bible and Lexicon, and to the Commentaries of Rosenmueller or Gesenius.—One phrase, however, as it is quite an unusual one, may require some explanation. XXXIV. 5. *וַיִּתְּחַד בְּשָׁמַיִם הָרָבִי*, literally, as Lowth renders it, *inebriatus est in coelis gladius meus*. The sense is, that *the sword of Jehovah rushes furiously from heaven upon his enemies, like a warrior who is excited by strong drink*. (Compare 3 Macc. 5: 2). It is a very common figure with the Oriental writers to represent the sword of a warrior as drinking, and being drunk with the blood of his enemies. So Abulfaragius, *The Turks rushed in, and their furious sword drank the blood of old men and children*. (See Gesenius in loc. Compare Deut. 32: 42. Jer. 46: 10, et al.). S.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE XXI.

[A. p. 178.] *Character of Jeremiah.*

Jerome probably adopted this opinion from his masters, the Jews. Of the more modern Rabbins, ABARBANEL (Praef. in Jer.) complains grievously of the grammatical ignorance of the prophet, and his frequent solecisms; which he says Ezra corrected by the Keri or marginal notes, for he remarks that they occur more frequently in him than elsewhere. Absurd and ridiculous! to attribute the errors of transcribers, which occur in almost every part of the Hebrew text, to the sacred writers themselves; the greater part of these errors he would indeed have found scarcely to exist, if he had consulted the more correct copies, which remain even at this day: for among these very marginal readings, there are but few, which, in the more ancient MSS. are not found in the text. WALTON has long since given a remarkable example of this kind (Prolegom. iv. 12). The collations of Dr. KENNICOTT will afford many more.

LOWTH.



[B. p. 178.] *Character of Ezekiel.*

I must confess that I feel not perfectly satisfied with myself, when in a matter entirely dependent upon taste, I can by no means bring myself to agree with our author. So far from esteeming Ezekiel equal to Isaiah in sublimity, I am inclined rather to think, that he displays more art and luxuriance in amplifying and decorating his subject than is consistent with the poetical fervour, or indeed with true sublimity. He is in general an imitator, and yet he has the art of giving an air of novelty and ingenuity, but not of grandeur and sublimity, to all his composition. The imagery which is familiar to the Hebrew poetry he constantly makes use of, and those figures which were invented by others, but were only glanced at, or partially displayed by those who first used them, he dwells upon, and depicts with such accuracy and copiousness, that he leaves nothing to add to them, nothing to be supplied by the reader's imagination. On this score his ingenuity is to be commended, and he is therefore of use to his readers, because he enables them better to understand the ancient poets; but he certainly does not strike with admiration, or display any trait of sublimity.

Of this I will propose only one example: many of the same kind may be found in looking over the writings of this prophet. In describing a great slaughter, it is very common in the best poets to introduce a slight allusion to birds of prey. Thus in the *ILIAD*:

Αὐτοὺς δ' ἔλωρ' αἰετὺς κυνέσσιν

Οἰωνοῖσι τε πασσι—

"Whose limbs, unburied on the naked shore,

"Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore."

Thus, it is the language of boasting in the historical part of Scripture—"I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the field." 1 Sam. xvii. 44. Asaph also in Psalm lxxviii. 48. "He gave their cattle to the hail, and their flocks to the birds." Moses is still more sublime, Deut. xxxii. 23, 24.

"I will spend mine arrows upon them.

"They shall be eaten up with hunger, a prey unto birds,

"And to bitter destruction!

"I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them,

"With the poison of the reptiles of the earth."

BUT HABAKKUK is more excellent than either of the former, chap. iii. 5, speaking of the victory of JEHOVAH over his enemies:

"Before him went the pestilence,

"And his footsteps were traced by the birds."



Doubtless, the *birds of prey*. ISAIAH is somewhat more copious, chap. xxxiv. 6, 7.

"For JEHOVAH celebrateth a sacrifice in Botzra,

"And a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

"And the wild goats shall fall down with them;

"And the bullocks, together with the bulls:

"And their own land shall be drunken with their blood,

"And their dust shall be enriched with fat."

These and other images Ezekiel has adopted, and has studiously amplified with singular ingenuity; and by exhausting all the imagery applicable to the subject, has in a manner made them his own. In the first prediction of the slaughter of Magog, the whole chapter consists of a most magnificent amplification of all the circumstances and apparatus of war, so that scarcely any part of the subject is left untouched; he adds afterwards in a bold and unusual style—"Thus, Son of man, saith JEHOVAH, speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field: assemble yourselves and come, gather yourselves on every side to the banquet, which I prepare for you, a great banquet on the mountains of Israel. Ye shall eat flesh, and ye shall drink blood; ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. Ye shall eat fat till ye be satiated, and drink blood till ye be drunken, in the banquet which I have prepared for you. Ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with men of valour, saith the Lord JEHOVAH." Ezek. xxxviii. 17—20. In this I seem to read a poet, who is unwilling to omit any thing of the figurative kind which presents itself to his mind, and would think his poem deficient, if he did not adorn it with every probable fiction which could be added: and for this very reason I cannot help placing him rather in the middle than superior class. Observe how the author of the Apocalypse, who is in general an imitator, but endued with a sublimer genius, and in whose prose all the splendour of poetry may be discerned, has conducted these sentiments of Ezekiel: "I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice unto the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat of the flesh of kings, and of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit upon them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great." Rev. xix. 17, 18.

But Ezekiel goes yet further, so delighted is he with this image, so intent is he upon the by-paths of the Muses, that he gives even the trees, taking them for empires, to the birds; and their shades or ghosts he consigns to the infernal regions. Thus chap. xxxi. 13—15. "Upon his trunk shall all the fowls of heaven remain, and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches. To the end that none of all the trees by the waters shall exalt themselves for their height, nor shoot up their top among the thick boughs; neither their trees stand up in their height, all that drink water: for they are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit, etc." In this we find novelty and variety, great fertility of genius, but no sublimity.

I had almost forgotten to mention, that Ezekiel lived at a period when the Hebrew language was visibly on the decline. And when we compare him with the Latin poets who succeeded the Augustan age, we may find some resemblance in the style, something that indicates the old age of poetry.

MICHAELIS.

[C. p. 180.] *Character of Habakkuk.*

On a very accurate perusal of Habakkuk, I find him a great imitator of former poets, but with some new additions of his own; not however in the manner of Ezekiel, but with much greater brevity, and with no common degree of sublimity. Ezekiel, for the most part, through his extreme copiousness, flags behind those whom he imitates; Habakkuk either rises superior, or at least keeps on an equality with them.

MICHAELIS.

[D. p. 181.] *Opinion of the Greeks on their prophetic poetry.*

"I find, too, that some of the oracles of Apollo have not escaped ridicule in this respect, though the obscurity of prophecy renders them in general so difficult to decipher, that the hearers have no leisure to bestow on an examination of the metre." Merc. in LUCIAN's Dial. entitled Jupiter Tragædus.

"A response from an oracle in verse having been recited by one of the company—I have often wondered (said Diogenianus) at the meanness and imperfection of the verses which conveyed the oracular responses; especially considering that Apollo is the president of the Muses, and, one should imagine, would no less interest himself in the style of his own predictions, than in the harmony of odes and other poetry: besides, that he certainly must be superior to Homer



and Hesiod in poetic taste and ability. Notwithstanding this, we find many of the oracles, both as to style and metre, deficient in prosody, and in every species of poetical merit." PLUTARCH, *Inq. why the Pythia now ceases to deliver her oracles in verse?*

LOWTH.

Just as the Bishop's observation is, concerning the prophetic oracles of the Greeks, yet whoever will be at the trouble of considering the predictions of Cassandra, in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, may easily perceive a peculiarity of imagery and style that would throw some light on the subject itself, as well as serve to illustrate the prophetic phraseology of the Hebrews.

HENLEY.

The prophecy of the Sibyl in the sixth Æneid might also be referred to as an example; in it the prophetic ecstasy is so admirably expressed, that the art and imitative powers of Virgil may contribute not a little to enable us to understand the language and manner of true prophecy.

MICHAELIS.

[E. p. 183.] *Fourth Eclogue of Virgil.*

The learned are generally agreed that the Eclogue in question cannot relate to Saloninus, a son of Pollio, born after the capture of Salona, who is spoken of by Servius, if any such person ever existed; since it appears from Dion and Appian, that the expedition of Pollio to Illyricum took place in the following year. Some have conjectured, that this poem relates to C. Asinius Gallus, a son of the same person, and indeed with much greater appearance of probability; since Asconius Pedianus reports, that he had heard from Gallus himself, that this poem was composed in honour of him. See SERV. ad Eclog. iv. 11. But Servius himself affirms, that Gallus was born in the preceding year, while Pollio was consul elect; and although such a boast might very well agree with the vanity of a man, who, Augustus himself said, would be desirous of acquiring the sovereignty after his death, though unequal to it; (TACIT. AN. i. 13), yet it is scarcely probable, that any poet, in common prudence, would predict any thing so magnificent of a son of Pollio. Further, why has he foretold this divine son to him as a consul only, and not as a father? which would have reflected much more honour on Pollio. Many, from these difficulties, have attributed the poet's compliment to Cæsar Octavius and to some child born in his family, as the certain heir to the empire. Julia, Marcellus, and Drusus, have all been mentioned. As to Drusus, neither his age nor person correspond to



the prediction ; and though the age of Marcellus might suit it better, yet the personal disagreement is the same. With respect to Julia, the daughter of Octavius, there can be no objection upon either account, if the Eclogue were written during the pregnancy of Scribonia, and that it was written before her delivery, is credible from the invocation it contains to Lucina : "O, chaste Lucina, aid !" — But let it be remembered by those who adopt any of these hypotheses, who, and in what station, Octavius then was ; not emperor and Augustus, the sovereign lord of the whole Roman empire, all which dignities became his only after the battle of Actium, nine years posterior to the date of this Eclogue ; but a triumvir, equal only in authority with Antony at least, not to speak of Lepidus. How then could the poet presume to predict to any son of Octavius, if at that time any son had been born to him, the succession to the empire ? But, if we should even grant, what is really true, that no person more worthy or more proper could be found, or to whom these predictions would be better suited, than to some of the descendants of Octavius ; and if even we should suppose that a son of his was at that time in being, still there is one argument sufficient to overturn the whole, and that is, that the Eclogue is inscribed to Pollio ; for at that time, and even for some time after, Pollio was of the party of Antony, and in opposition to Octavius. Let us with this in our minds take a summary view of the actions of Pollio, after the death of Julius Cæsar ; and let us pay some attention to the chronology of the times. In the year of Rome 711, C. Asinius Pollio having conducted the war against Sextus Pompeius, on his return from Spain delivered over his army to Antony, after his flight from Mutina. In the year 713, Pollio held Cisalpine Gaul, as Antony's lieutenant ; and along with Ventidius hovered about the rear of Salvidienus, the lieutenant of Octavius, who was attempting to annoy Lucius Antonius : Lucius being besieged at Perugia, Pollio in vain attempted his relief, and afterwards returned to Ravenna : he held Venetia a long time subject to Antony ; and after having performed great actions in that part of the world, joined Antony, bringing over with him, at the same time, Domitius Ænobarbus, and the fleet under his command. About the end of the year 714, the peace of Brundisium took place, the negotiators of which were Pollio as consul, on the part of Antony, and Mæcenas on the part of Octavius, and Cocceius on the part of both, as their common friend ; and about this time the fourth Eclogue of Virgil was written. In the year 715,

Antony sent Pollio as his lieutenant against the Parthini into Illyricum; who triumphed over them in the month of October. Thus far VELLEIUS, APPIAN, and DIO. About this time a private disagreement took place between Pollio and Octavius; and Octavius wrote some indecent verses against Pollio. MACROB. SATURN. ii. 14. From this time to the battle of Actium, which happened in 723, in the beginning of September, Pollio kept himself perfectly neutral, and took no part in the contest between Antony and Octavius. "I must not omit," says VELLEIUS, ii. 86, "a remarkable action and saying of Asinius Pollio. After the peace of Brundisium (he should have said after his triumph) he continued in Italy, nor did he ever see the queen, or, after the mind of Antony became enfeebled by his destructive passion, take any part in his affairs; and when Caesar requested him to accompany him to the battle of Actium: The kindnesses, said he, which I have rendered Antony, are greater in reality than those he has rendered me, but the latter are better known to the world. I will withdraw myself entirely from the contest, and I shall become the prey of the conqueror." From considering these facts, it appears to me altogether incredible, that Virgil should send, and inscribe to Pollio, a poem in praise of Octavius, and wholly written in celebration of his family. LOWTH.

Virgilii eclogam quartam cum descriptione aureae, sive Messianae, aetatis ea, quae inter Iesaiana oracula c. vii. seqq. exstat, comparavimus in *Commentar. ad Iesai.* P. I. p. 305. Causam similitudinis Romanum inter atque Hebraeum poetam, respectu quoque habito ad ea quae nostro loco de hac re Lowthus disseruit, satis exposuit Heyne in Argumento illi Eclogae praemisso. Illud vero mirari satis non possumus, in puero illo, quo nascituro, Virgilio, aut potius Sibylla, canente aurea reditura sit aetas, inter Romanos illius temporis quaerendo tot tantosque viros doctos et ingenosos operam vanissimam consumsisse, neque vidisse eos, istum puerum haud minus fictionis poeticae esse, ac sunt ceterae descriptiones imaginesque isto in poemate obviae. C. Asinium Gallum, Pollionis filium, a Virgilio illo carmine celebrari, plerorumque interpretum, Asconio Pediano auctore, est sententia. Sed non cogitarunt isti interpretes, ridiculum futurum Virgilium fuisse, si aliquem Pollionis filium cecinisset, antequam gravida Consulis uxor pepererit. Quod Asconii Pediani attinet testimonium, cui multum in hac quaestione tribuere solent, de eo verissimum iudicium tulit Lowthus p. 402, not. Nos quidem nulli dubitamus, Maronem Pollionis sui in orbem Romanum, Brun-



duſino foedere a ſe pacatum, merita nobiliſſimo illo carmine ita extollere, ut ſpem faceret, fore, ut aurea illa ætas, de qua iamdudum priſci cecinere vates, eam puero quodam divino, coeleſti virgine nato (vs. 6, 7,) eſſe reverſuram, Pollione Conſule initium capiat.

ROSENMUELLER.

I can ſee nothing ſo very ſtrange and unaccountable in the circumſtance that two poets of exalted genius, in deſcribing the ſame ſubject, (*the golden age*), ſhould uſe ſimilar language. It ſeems to me that the wonder which Lowth expreſſes (p. 183) is quite out of place here.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE XXII.

[A. p. 189.] *Alphabetic poems of the Hebrews.*

The alphabetic poems of the Old Teſtament are the following: Pſalms xxv. xxxiv. xxxvii. cxl. cxii. cxix. cxlv. Proverbs xxxi. from the tenth verſe to the end; and Lamentations i.—iv. Of theſe the only ones that exhibit any conſiderable degree of poetical merit are Pſalm xxxvii. and Lamentations. The nature of the compoſition was extremely unfavourable to that glow of feeling ſo eſſential to the higher kinds of poetry; and the excellence of the two poems juſt mentioned, notwithſtanding the diſadvantages reſulting from the mode of writing, evinces great ſkill and a wonderful command of language in their authors. The alphabetic arrangement appears ſeldom to have been applied to *original compoſition*; but rather to *new collections* of detached maxims and ſayings, which had long been extant among the people: and the deſign of it, as Lowth obſerves, undoubtedly was to aid the memory. The poems of this ſort are very few in number, and moſt of them are ſomewhat imperfect in the alphabetic arrangement. Theſe imperfections, in ſome inſtances, may have ariſen from the errors of tranſcribers. See Ps. xxv. where the verſes א, פ, and ק, are wanting; Ps. 34: 6, 7; 37: 7, 8, 20, 21; 34: 18, etc. (Compare Eichhorn, *Einleitung*, Band I. S. 404 ff.) S.

[B. p. 191.] *Subject of the Lamentations of Jeremiah.*

Michaelis, in his edition of Lowth, attempts to defend the opinion of Joſephus, Jerome, and Uſher, in regard to the occaſion of the Lamentations of Jeremiah. S.



Mutavit tamen postea sententiam Michaelis, et Lowthianam adoptavit; vid. Neue orient. und exeget. Bibliothek P. I. p. 106. Dathius quoque, qui quum *Prophetas maiores ex recensione textus Hebraei et versionum antiquarum Latine versos notisque illustratos* primum ederet a. 1779, existimavit, Ieremiam in Threnis deplorare funestissimam illam calamitatem, qua piissimus rex Iosias in proelio contra Aegyptios vitam amisit; eam sententiam quum librum suum post sex annos curis secundis denuo in lucem emisit, pluribus argumentis ipse refutavit. Concludit suam de hac re disputationem his verbis: "Aliud accidit argumentum adeo evidens, ut ipse indigner, me eius vel oblitum, vel negligentiore fuisse. Si haec carmina in memoriam optimi regis Iosiae composita sunt, cur virtutes eius, pietas in Deum, merita in rempublicam non celebrantur? cur nulla mortis tristissimae mentio iniicitur? Si quoque concedatur, posse locum Cap. IV. 20. de rege Iosia explicari, tamen hic unus locus non sufficit ad hunc regem tantis meritis insignem, tam acerbè ab omnibus deploratum, tanquam obiectum primum horum carmium constituendum. Quae omnia lugent urbem vastatam, templum destructum (V. 6. seqq.), omnem rempublicam sine spe restitutionis sublatam." Sed locus iste IV. 20 ne quidem cum aliqua veri specie de Iosia explicari potest. Sonat is ita: *Vita nostra, Iovae unctus, captus est in eorum foveis*. Quod minime Iosiae convenit, qui non captus, sed occisus est, vid. 2 Reg. xxiii. 29. Plura vide in Eichhornii Einleit. in das A. T. P. III. p. 549, edit. sec., vel p. 626 seqq. edit. tert.

ROSENMUELLER.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE XXIII.

[A. p. 196.] PSALM XLII.

This poem seems to have been composed by David, when he was expelled his kingdom by his rebellious son, and compelled to fly to the borders of Lebanon, as it is plain he did, from 2 Sam. xvii. 24, 26, 27. Undoubtedly, whoever composed this Psalm was expelled from the sacred city, and wandered as an exile in the regions of Hermon, and the heights of Lebanon, whence Jordan is fed by the melting of the perpetual snow, (v. 7). Let it be remembered, by the way, that David betook himself to these places when he fled from Saul, but concealed himself in the interior parts of Judea. Here then he pitched his camp, protected by the surrounding moun-

tains and woods; and hither the veteran soldiers, attached personally to him, and averse to change, resorted from every part of Palestine. Here also, indulging his melancholy, the prospect and the objects about him suggested many of the ideas in this poem. Observing the deer which constantly came from the distant valleys to the fountains of Lebanon, and comparing this circumstance with his earnest desire to revisit the temple of God, and perhaps elevating his thoughts to a higher, celestial temple, he commences his poem:

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks,  
 "So panteth my soul after thee, O God.  
 "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God;  
 "When shall I enter, and appear before God?"

That is, *enter into the temple*, from which I am now an exile. He adds a bitterer cause of grief than his exile, namely, the reproaches of the multitude, and the cruel taunt, that he is *deserted of his God*, and that the deity, of whom he had boasted, fails to appear for his assistance, than which nothing can be more grating to an honest mind, and a mind conscious of its own piety. Compare 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8.

"My tears have been my sustenance,  
 "By day and by night,  
 "While they continually say unto me,  
 "Where is now thy God?"

The repetition of the name of God raises in him fresh uneasiness, and causes all his wounds to bleed again: this forces him to exclaim: "I remember *God*, and I dissolve in tears." For so the word *אֱלֹהִים* ought to be translated, and not according to the Masoretic punctuation, "I remember *these things*:" since an obscurity arises from this punctuation, and it is difficult to say what things are referred to.

"I remember God, and pour out myself in tears:  
 "When I went with the multitude to the temple of God,  
 "With the voice of joy and gladness, with the multitude leaping for joy."

He now restrains his tears:

"Why art thou so cast down, O my soul?  
 "And why art thou so disquieted within me?  
 "Hope thou in God, for I still shall praise him."

He again breaks forth into lamentations, with which he elegantly intermingles a poetical description of Lebanon. There are upon



those hills frequent cataracts, and, in the spring season, the rivulets are uncommonly turbid by the melting of the snow :

“ Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy cataracts ;

“ And all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.”

These form the principal imagery of the poem, and I omit the rest, lest I should fatigue the reader by the minuteness of criticism, which is both useless and impertinent, when the subject wants no illustration.

MICHAELIS.

PSALM XLIII. connected with XLII.

I find EUSEBIUS was formerly of the same opinion. “ This Psalm is without a title in the original, and consequently in all the old translations : there is indeed great reason, from the similarity of thought and expression in both the Psalms, to believe that it originally made a part of the Psalm preceding.” In Psalm xliii. this conjecture receives further confirmation from the manuscripts. The xliid and xliiid Psalms are united together in twenty-two MSS. The Psalms, however, are distinguished from each other in the MSS. rarely by the numeral letters, but chiefly by these two methods : either by a single word placed in the vacant space between them, which is usually the breadth of one line : and this word is commonly the last word of the preceding, or the initial word of the succeeding Psalm ; or else by the first word of each Psalm being transcribed in letters of a larger size.

LOWTH.

[B. p. 196.] *Book of Jasher.*

Since so many conjectures have been published concerning the book of *Jasher* and its title, without coming to any certain decision, I will also, without further apology, venture to give my sentiments upon it. The book of *Jasher* is twice quoted, first in Josh. x. 13, where the quotation is evidently poetical, and forms exactly three distichs :

“ Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon,

“ And thou Moon, in the valley of Ajalon :

“ And the Sun stood still, and the Moon stayed her course,

“ Until the people were avenged of their enemies.

“ And the Sun tarried in the midst of the heavens,

“ And hasted not to go down in a whole day.”

And afterwards in the passage referred to in the text, we find the above lamentation of David extracted from it. The custom of the



Hebrews giving titles to their books from the initial word is well known, as Genesis is called *בְּרֵאשִׁית*, etc. They also sometimes named the book, from some remarkable word in the first sentence; thus the book of Numbers is sometimes called *בְּמִדְבָּר*. We find also in their writings, canticles which had been produced on important occasions, introduced by some form of this kind: *אָז יָשָׁר* (*then sang*) or *וַיָּשָׁר*, etc. thus *אָז יָשָׁר מֹשֶׁה*, "then sang Moses," Exod. xv. 1. *וַתִּשָּׂא דְבוֹרָה*, "and Deborah sang," Jud. v. 1. See also the same inscription of Psalm xviii. Thus I suppose the book of *Jasher* to have been some collection of sacred songs, composed at different times and on different occasions, and to have had this title, because the book itself and most of the songs began in general with this word: *וַיָּשָׁר*.\* And the old Syriac translator was certainly of this opinion, when in these places he substituted the word *אִישָׁר* (he sang;) the meaning of which, says the ARABIC commentator, is *a book of songs*; in another place he himself explains it by a word expressive of *hymns*. I, however, agree in opinion with those, who suppose this Lamentation originally to have borne the title of *קֶשֶׁת* (a bow) either in memory of the slaughter made by the archers of the enemy, or from the *bow* of Jonathan, of which particular mention is made in verse 22. The LXX seem to have favoured this opinion.

LOWTH.

The opinion of Lowth in regard to the contents of the book of *Jasher* is the one now most generally admitted among the ablest critics; though there is a difference of opinion respecting the etymology of the word. (Compare Herder, *Geist*, Th. II. S. 129; Gesenius, *Lex. in יָשָׁר*.) Two copies of this ancient book are said to have been recently discovered, one in Persia and the other in Morocco; from which an edition of the work is to be printed in England. S.

Ilgen *הַיָּשָׁר הַדֶּקְרָה* notare arbitratur *librum dexteritatis*, quo nomine collectio carminum, exempla dexteritatis et omnis virtutis, qualis ea illo tempore esse poterat, celebrantium, nuncupata esset, quemadmodum celebris cuiusdam apud Arabas Anthologiae liber primus, qui carmina continet heroum facta laudantia, *حِجَاسَة*, *Hhamasa*, id est, *virtus bellica*, inscribitur. (C. D. Ilgen *de imb. lapideo, et solis ac lunae mora*, etc. Lips. 1793).

ROSENMUELLER.

Concerning the stopping of the sun and moon in their course, compare Homer, *Iliad*, II. 412 ff.

\* The future tense of *יָשָׁר* is *יָשָׁר*, and not *יָשָׁר*, as Lowth supposes.

[C. p. 199.] *Meaning of* אָרְכָּשׁ 2 SAM. I. 18.

Lowthianam coniecturam confirmat GVIL. IONES, Poës. Asiat. Commentar. L. IV. C. XIII. p. 326. edit. prim. Oxon., s. p. 269. Lips. not. : "Inscribitur," inquit, "hoc poema etiam אָרְכָּשׁ, *Arcus*, more Asiaticorum, qui ea carmina, quibus praecipue delectantur, inscriptione brevi, et de versu quodam insigniori desumpta, notare solent. Sic percelebratum carmen poetae *Cab Ben Zoheir* [a G. I. Lette editum una cum Amralkeisii Moallaka, Lugd. Batav. 1748. 4.] vocitatur modo *الأمان*, *Securitas*, modo *بانت سعاد* *Banat Soad*, propterea quod hoc habeat initium:

بانت سعاد فقلبي اليوم مندبول

Abiit amica mea Soada, et cor meum hodie moerore conficitur!

Sic Alcorani capita inscribuntur: الكوثر [Sur. CVIII. de Cauthar, fluvio Paradisi, cuius in eo Cap. mentio], الغيل [Elephas, Sur. CV.], العلق [Sanguis concretus, Sur. XCVI.], الليل [Nox, Sur. XCII.], الشمس [Sol, Sur. XCI.]. Ceterum Jones l. c. Threnum Davidicum non solum in versiculos distinctum, verum etiam elegantissima Graeca metaphrasi expressum exhibuit.

ROSENMUELLER.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE XXIV.

[A. p. 202.] ECCLESIASTES XII. 11.

This I think is one of the *geminata* proverbs (or those which "contain a double image," as mentioned before) and requires a different mode of interpretation for the two images, as having nothing coalescent in their natures.—It is the property of a proverb to *prick sharply*, and *hold firmly*. The first idea is included in the image of a goad—the latter in the nail *deeply*, and therefore *firmly* driven.

HENLEY.

In Palestine, it formerly made an essential part of the building of a house, to furnish the inside of the several apartments with sets of spikes, nails, or large pegs, upon which to dispose of, and hang up, the several movables in common use, and proper to the apartment. These spikes they worked into the walls at the first erection



of them; the walls being of such materials, that they could not bear their being driven in afterwards; and they were contrived so as to strengthen the walls by binding the parts together, as well as to serve for convenience.

LOWTH.

[B. p. 205.] רִבְּוֹתָיִם.

It is the opinion of a very ingenious writer, in a learned work which he has lately produced, that the greater part of this book was written in prose, but that it contains many scraps of poetry, introduced as occasion served: and to this opinion I am inclined to assent. See A. V. Desvieux, *Tent. Phil. et Crit. in Eccl. Lib. II. Cap. 1.*

LOWTH.

For a very full and interesting discussion of the whole subject, see Eichhorn, (*Einleitung*, Band V. SS. 250—288). The subject is discussed more briefly, but with equal learning and greater sobriety, by Jahn, (*Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 490—497 of Turner's translation). This is a book which ought to be in the hands of every biblical student. He who merely *reads* it, will be disappointed; but he who *studies* it, will be richly rewarded for his labour.

S.

[C. p. 209.] ECCLESIASTICUS XXIV. 27.

The grandson of Sirach appears in this place to have fallen into an error, and to have failed of expressing the sentiment of his ancestor: for finding the word imperfectly written in his copy, he read it כִּנְאֹר, and rashly translated it ὡς φως (as the light.) Observe also the incongruity of this word with the context, according to the common reading: Pison, Tigris, Euphrates, Jordan, *the light*, Gibon: in the place of *the light*, some river must certainly be intended, and therefore we ought to read כִּנְאֹר, ὡς ὁ Ποταμός, *as the river*, that is, the Nile, so called, for the sake of distinction: and doubtless to a Jew, who resided in its neighbourhood, and who was a spectator of its wonderful inundations, it would appear worthy of being ranked with the most noble rivers, and consequently worthy of this distinction. Moreover, JABLONSKY, *Pantheon Egypt. lib. iv. cap. i. sect. 2.* is of opinion, that the word יִנְאֹר chiefly refers to the Nile in the sacred writers; and supposes יִנְאֹר, in the Egyptian JARO, to have been the first and only name of the Nile among the Egyptians. This word, however, itself is defectively read כִּנְאֹר, Amos viii. 8, ("it is read כִּנְאֹר in four MSS." K.) but being repeated immediate-



ly, it is more fully expressed נַחַל, ix. 5. See CAPPELL, Crit. Sac. iv. 2, 11. A learned friend of mine observed to me, that the great BOCHART had long since been of the same opinion, whose authority I am happy to adduce in favour of what I have here asserted: "נַחַל is a river, as well as נָחַל. So it occurs Amos viii. 8, where it is spoken of the Nile, and in the same sense it is used by the son of Sirach, Ecclesiasticus. xxiv. 27, where it has been hastily translated *the light*." Chanaan, lib. i. cap. 23. LOWTH.

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#### NOTES ON LECTURE XXV.

[A. p. 211.] *Antiquity of the ode.*

This conclusion appears to me neither consonant to reason nor to fact. The first use of poetry was probably to preserve the remembrance of events, and not the expressions of passion; accordingly, the remains of the first poetic compositions appear to have been of the former kind. One instance was given in a preceding Lecture relative to the history of Lamech, and another may here be added concerning that of Nimrod—"He was a mighty hunter (rather warrior) before the Lord:" wherefore it is said:—

"As Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord."

Agreeable to this idea is an observation, respecting the Arabians, of the late ingenious but ill-treated Dr. Brown: "The *oldest compositions* are in *rhythm*, or *rude verse*, and are often cited as *proofs* of their *subsequent history*." It is not only evident that Moses applied them in this way, but also that they were long prior to any example of the existence of an ode; which, however, seems to have been in fact, as well as in nature, the next species of poetic composition.

HENLEY.

The rude poetry of barbarous nations (as far as we can judge from the accounts of those who have visited the South Sea Islands and the Indian nations) relates in general to *love* and *war*; it is employed in cherishing, or in exciting the passions. Notwithstanding, therefore, the ingenuity of the above remark (which on that account I would not omit) I am inclined to think there is more foundation for our author's theory than Mr. H. supposes. See *Essays Hist. and Mor.* Ess. i. p. 31.

GREGORY.

[B. p. 214.] *Lyric poetry of David.*

It will not be unseasonable in this place, perhaps, to offer a few remarks on the peculiar character of the lyric poetry of David. For some commentators, by too indiscriminately praising it, have paid no regard to its peculiar characteristics; and thus, from an intemperate zeal, the poet has even lost a part of that commendation which was justly due to him.

For my part, judging rather by my taste and feelings, than by any rules of art, I think David seems to excel in this first species of ode, the characteristic of which is sweetness. He is unequalled when he describes the objects of nature, the fields, the woods, the fountains; and of his other odes those are most excellent, which he composed in his exiles: nor is this any thing extraordinary; he had then more leisure for the cultivation of poetry, he experienced more vivid sensations than at other times, and he treated of those objects which, being immediately before his eyes, brought back to his mind the recollection of his youth, and inspired his imagination with fresh vigour. It is however remarkable, that those which he composed in his old age, when he fled from Absalom, not only equal the fruits of his early years, but even surpass them in fire and spirit: if, as I am fully persuaded, the twenty-third and forty-second Psalms were produced during that exile.

On the other hand, those Psalms interest me less, in which the more violent affections prevail, whether of sorrow or indignation, not even excepting such as imprecate curses on his enemies. There is in these much of the terrific; but in reading them the heart is not affected, the passions are not vehemently excited. These odes do not possess that general solemnity and awful sublimity which characterize the book of Job, a composition of a different class, but possessing exquisite force in moving the passions. Neither are loftiness of diction, or boldness in describing objects of terror, to be accounted among the excellencies of David; for in these respects he not only yields, in my opinion, to Job, but also to Moses. I do not except the eighteenth Psalm, in the first verses of which I observe more of art and design, than of real horror and sublimity: in what follows, the warmth of the composition subsides, and it becomes more temperate than might be expected from such an exordium. The Mosaic Psalms I confess please me more in this respect, and therefore I prefer the twenty-ninth to that in question.

MICHAELIS.

## [C. p. 215.] PSALM XXIII.

This Psalm is deserving of all the commendation which our author has bestowed upon it. If I am not mistaken, it was composed by David, when he was expelled from the holy city and temple: for in the 6th verse he hopes for a return to the house of God. Since of all the divine mercies he particularly commemorates this, that in time of necessity he wants for nothing, and is even received to a banquet in the sight of his enemies, I conceive it to relate to that time, when, flying from the contest with his disobedient son, he pitched his camp beyond Jordan, and was in danger of seeing his little army perish for want of provision in that uncultivated region, or of being deserted by all his friends. Affairs, however, turned out quite different: for what he could not foresee or hope, the Almighty performed for him. The veteran soldiers flowed in to him from every quarter, and his whole camp was so liberally supported by the good and opulent citizens, that in this very situation he was enabled to collect an army and risk the event of a battle. See 2 Sam. xvii. 26—29.

He therefore compares himself to a sheep, and the Almighty to a shepherd: a very obvious figure, and which every day occurred to his sight during his stay in those desert parts. The sheep, timid, defenceless, exposed to all the beasts of prey, and possessed of little knowledge or power of foreseeing or avoiding danger, are indebted for life, safety, and every thing, to the care of the shepherd. We must remember also, that the exiled king had formerly himself been a shepherd. The recollection therefore of his past life breaks in upon his mind. "Jehovah," says he, "is my shepherd, I shall want nothing." It is his province to provide for my existence, and to procure for me those blessings which I am unable to obtain for myself. The *tender herb* (שׁוֹמֵר), which is probably the *virgin* herb, or that which has not budded into seed or blossom) is more grateful to sheep than that which is seeded (זֶרַע), Gen. i. 10, 11. In meadows, therefore, covered with the green and tender grass, he supposes Jehovah to cause him to rest under his care. He was expelled to Lebanon, from the tops of which cataracts of melted snow are constantly falling: these are dangerous for sheep to approach, nor is the water sufficiently wholesome. He therefore adds, that he is led to waters gently flowing, where the clear stream meanders through the fertile plain. The scene which was before his eyes con-



sisted of rude hills and valleys, deep, gloomy, dark, and horrid, the haunts only of the fiercest animals. I would here remark, that the word צלמות, which, according to the Masoretic punctuation, is read צלמות, and translated the *shadows of death*, would be better read צלמות, and translated simply shades, or *the valley of the shades*, and I am led to this conclusion by comparing it with the Arabic. There is no safety for the sheep in these valleys but in the care of the shepherd. You are therefore presented with a great variety of contrasted imagery in this Psalm; on the one hand, the open pastures, and the flowing rivulets, the recollection of which never fails to delight; and on the other hand, the cheerless and gloomy valleys, which inspire the reader with fresh horror. Descending from figurative to plain language, he next celebrates the bounty of God in preparing him a banquet in the face of his enemies; and therefore regales himself with the delicious hope, that he shall once more be restored to his sacred temple.

MICHAELIS.

[D. p. 216.] כִּי־יִשְׁמַחַ־לִּי־יְהוָה.

This Psalm is one of the fifteen, which are entitled, *Odes of the Ascensions*: that is, which were sung when the people came up either to worship in Jerusalem at the annual festivals, or perhaps from the Babylonish captivity. The return is certainly called "the *ascension or coming up* from Babylon," Ezr. vii. 9. And the old SYRIAC translator, who explains the subjects of the Psalms by apposite titles, refers to this circumstance almost all the Psalms that bear this inscription; some of them indeed without sufficient foundation; but many of them manifestly have relation to it. Theodoret indiscriminately explains them all as relating to the Babylonish captivity: and thus illustrates the title: "Odes of the Ascensions: Theodotion, "Songs of the Ascensions:" But Symmachus and Aquila, "on the returns." It is evident that the coming up and the ascent relate to the return of the people from the Babylonish captivity." THEOD. in Ps. cxx. But we must not omit remarking also, that both in the Old and New Testament there is scarcely a phrase more common than "to go up to Jerusalem, to go up to the feast," etc. (See John, vii. 8.) And observe above the rest, Ps. cxxii. which can scarcely be applied to any thing but the celebration of some festival. What the Jews say about the steps *ascending* to the temple is unworthy the attention of any person of common sense. In the last period of this Psalm, the particle שֶׁ is necessarily to be referred to the word

צִיּוֹן, and there is nothing else to which it can be referred. Besides, to what, except to *Sion*, can the promises הַבְּרִיכָה and הַיְיָ relate? (See particularly Ps. cxxxii. 13 and 15.) These words are indeed ambiguous, so that they may refer either to temporal or eternal happiness, or to both alike. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 2, etc. with Ps. xxiv. 5, and Prov. xxvii. 27, with Dan. xii. 2.) And in this place, according to the nature of the mystical allegory, they may be interpreted in either sense. If these remarks be true, the critics have taken a great deal of pains about nothing. There is no occasion for emendation. If the ellipsis be only supplied by the word בִּטָּל (as the dew) or simply by the particle ו or כ (and or as) before the word *descending* (or which descends) the construction will be complete. In the same manner Hezekiah says in Isaiah :

“בְּכֹסֶם קִנּוֹר בֵּן אֲצִפְנָה.” Chap. xxxviii. 14. LOWTH.

Ambigo adhuc, nihil de titulis Psalmorum certi statui posse ratus, dum voces musicos et poeticas orientis ignoramus. Inter has sine dubio est *scalae* nomen. In ASSEMANI Bibliotheca Orientali, T. I. p. 62, invenio מַעְלֵי וְמַעְלֵי מַעְלֵי *scalas odarum*, quae tamen quales sint, dicere non habeo.

MICHAELIS.

Cf. I. G. EICHHORNII Praefat. ad Ionesii Commentarios Poes. Asiat. p. XXXII. et XXXIV., ubi ipsa Assemanii verba adducuntur, e quibus apparet מַעְלֵי esse nomen cuidam carminum generi proprium. Hebraeorum sententia, a Nostratibus fere explorata, Psalmos illos quindecim qui CXIX. excipiunt, appellatos esse שִׁירֵי הַמַּעְלִיּוֹת ideo, quod decantari Levitis suserint ex gradibus illis quindecim, per quos ex feminarum atrio, in templo Hierosolymitano, ad Israelitarum atrium ascendendum erat, doctum defensorem nactus est I. G. LACKEMACHER in Observatt. philologg. P. IX. p. 60., cf. P. I. p. 26. Varias de istius appellationis ratione sententias expendit EBERHARD TILING in Disquisitione de ratione Inscriptionis XV. Psalmorum, qui dicuntur שִׁירֵי הַמַּעְלִיּוֹת, seu Cantica Ascensionum, una cum succincta expositione eorundem, Bremae 1765, in octon. Nec non I. A. STARK in Davidis aliorumque Poetarum Hebraeor. Carmina. Vol. I. p. 422. seqq. et I. I. BELLERMANN in dem Versuch ueber die Metrik der Hebraeer, p. 190. seqq., qui appellationem שִׁירֵי הַמַּעְלִיּוֹת ad rem metricam pertinere, illaque carmen versibus *trochaicis* constans significari existimat, illud enim esse pedem metricum, in quo tonus *ascendat*, id est, cuius syllaba prior sit longa. Alias coniecturas dabit Argumentum a Nobis Psalmo cxx. prae-



missum in Psalmis perpetua Annotatione illustratis, Vol. III. p. 2514 seqq.

ROSENMUELLER.

(Compare Stuart's Hebrew Chrestomathy, p. 198; De Wette, Commentar ueber die Psalmen, Einleitung, SS. 43, 44; and Gesenius, Commentar ueber Jes. 17: 13. 26: 21). S.

### NOTES ON LECTURE XXVI.

[A. p. 218.] PSALM XCI. 9.

I apprehend there is no change of person till the 14th verse; for the 9th verse I take to be of quite a different nature.

"For thou, JEHOVAH, art my hope,

"Very high hast thou placed thy refuge."

There are many interpretations of this period, which are differently approved by different persons. One of these is, that the first member consists of an address from the believer to God, and the second of a reply from the prophet to the believer: which is extremely harsh and improbable, although the plain and obvious construction of the passage favours this opinion. Others, among which are the old translators, suppose, that in the second line there is no change of persons at all, but that JEHOVAH is still spoken of:

"Who hast placed thy dwelling on high;"

which is altogether nothing. Others, in fine, to avoid these absurdities, have fallen into still greater; for they give quite a new turn to the sentence, altering the construction in this manner:

"For thou, JEHOVAH, who art my hope,

"Hast placed thy refuge very high:"

But this I think will scarcely be endured by a good ear, which is ever so little accustomed to the Hebrew idiom. THEODORET formerly made a different attempt upon the passage:

"There is wanting to the construction of the sentence, THOU HAST SAID, *thou Lord art my hope*. This is the usual idiom of the prophetic writings, and especially of the Psalms."

I have very little doubt that this is the true sense of the passage.

LOWTH.

[B. p. 222.] *Pindaric and Hebrew ode.*

Multo verius, nostra sententia, de odæ Hebraeae atque Pindaricæ ratione, iudicium tulit Lowthus, quam A. F. RVCKERSFELDER,



qui in *Commentatione quaedam Cantica Sacra ex genio Pindaricarum illustrante* (in *Auctoris Sylloge Commentationum et Observationum philologico-exegeticarum et criticarum*, Daventr. 1762 in octon.) probare conatus est, non ignota Hebraeis fuisse carmina, quae Pindaricum internum aequae ac externum prae se ferant characterem, et ita quidem, ut videri possit, eam poësin Pindaro deus usitatam, primum Ebraeis debere originem. Quem in finem duo celeberrima carmina, Deborahae *Ἐνὶ λυκίῳ*, Iud. v. et Psalmum lxxviii. in Strophas Chorosque divisa, atque ad Pindarici carminis regulas exacta proposuit. Quod autem carminis Pindarici primum characterem in eo situm esse statuit, quod obiectum carminis poetae semper *proxime* sub oculo versetur, seu quod omnia in Pindari carminibus faciant ad confirmandam vel illustrandam unicam propositionem primariam, *sine digressionibus*, aut aliis poetarum licentiis, duplicem scopum coniungentibus, id, ut operose demonstrare studeat unius alteriusve odæ Pindaricae analysi, tamen nemini persuaserit.

ROSENMUELLER.

[C. p. 224.] *Didactic and historic Psalms.*

Ad secundum poeseos lyricae genus, quod lenioris et remissionis sonus odas constituit, I. A. STARK (in *Sylloge Commentatt.* p. 56. seqq., et in *Davidis aliorumque poetarum Hebraeorum Carmin. Libr. V.* p. 604) recte observat maxime referendos esse *didactici* atque *historici* argumenti Psalmos. Poeta in his carminibus non ipse fingit, non inflammatae imaginationi et concitatis affectibus indulget; sed inventam iam a veritate materiam arripit, eam poeseos gratiis condecoratam lectori et spectatori ante oculos ponit, et ita quidem, ut modo ad primum, sublimem, characterem ascendat et summo splendore atque magnificentia illam induat: modo vero ad planum characterem se demittat, et omnibus gratiis, pulchritudine atque incunditate eam ornet. Et e Psalmis quidem didactici argumenti exempla profert Ps. xxiii. xxvii. xlv. l. cxxviii., ex historicis Ps. cv. cvi., quorum ille res Israelitarum a primis gentis initiis ad Palestinae occupationem celebrat, hic vero fata eorum ab exitu ex Aegypto ad reditum ex captivitate Babylonica canit.

ROSENMUELLER.

## NOTES ON LECTURE XXVII.

[A. p. 228.] PSALM XXIV. 6.

It ought to be read either with the LXX. VULG. ARAB. ÆTHIOP. פני אל יעקב; or with the SYR. פניך אל יעקב, which is much the same. "It is פניך אלהי יעקב in a MS. in possession of ERNER ESCHENBACH, Norimberg. See NADLERI *Dissertat. de EBNERI Codicibus MStis.* 1748." K. The *holy ark*, and the *shechinah* which remained upon it, the symbol of the divine presence, is called the *face of God*: and to seek the face of God, is to appear before the ark, to worship at the sanctuary of God; which was required of the Israelites thrice a year. See 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 2 Chron. vii. 14. Ps. xxvii. 8. Exod. xxiii. 17.

"Seek JEHOVAH and his strength,  
"Seek his face for ever.

Psalm cv. 4.

Where it is worthy of remark, that כֹּחַ (his strength) is parallel and synonymous to פָּנֶיךָ (his face) and signifies the ark of God: compare Psalm lxxviii. 61, cxxxii. 8. They but trifle, who endeavour to extort any thing reasonable from the common reading. Further, I am of opinion, that in vs. 9th the verb וַהֲנִיחָא in *Niphal* ought to be repeated: so all the old translators seem to have read it.

LOWTH.

Quid tamen in hac sententia desiderari possit, non video: *quaerentes faciem tuam sunt Iacobus*: i. e. ii demum Israëlitaevi veri, dignique hoc monte habentur, qui tuam faciem quaerunt. Veteresne, quos citat noster, legerint יָאֵל יַעֲקֹב, an cum non paucis interpretum יַעֲקֹב elliptice poni pro *Deo Iacobi* crediderint, incertum est. Arabis certe et Aethiopis nulla in variis lectionibus Psalmorum existimandis auctoritas numerusve, Graeca interpretantium, non Hebraica. In Psalmis idem de Vulgata versione plerumque tenendum, alibi meliore et magis sua.

MICHAELIS.

[B. p. 229.] *Interpretation of the historical Psalms.*

I wish most earnestly, that this observation of our author might be properly attended to by the commentators upon the Psalms: since whoever neglects it must of necessity fall into very gross errors. There are some who, attempting to explain the Psalms from the historical parts of Scripture, act as if every occurrence were known to them, and as if nothing had happened during the reign of David

which was not committed to writing. This, however, considering the extreme brevity of the sacred history, and the number and magnitude of the facts which it relates, must of course be very far from the truth. The causes and motives of many wars are not at all adverted to, the battles that are related are few, and those the principal. Who can doubt, though ever so unexperienced in military affairs, that many things occurred, which are not mentioned, between the desertion of Jerusalem by David, and that famous battle, which extinguished the rebellion of Absalom? The camp must have been frequently removed, as circumstances varied, to places of greater safety; much trouble must have been had in collecting the veteran soldiers from different posts, and not a few battles and skirmishes must have occurred, before the exiled king could so far presume upon the strength and increase of his army as to quit the mountains, and try the open field. This last battle being fought on this side of Jordan, in the forest of Ephraim, is it not natural to suppose, that something must have occurred to compel Absalom, whose camp was beyond Jordan, to return into Palestine, properly so called: possibly the preservation of the royal city? Or is it possible to compare the history in 2 Sam. viii. 13, and Psalm lx. and not perceive, that some unfortunate events must have happened previous to the victories over the Syrians and Idumeans, and that affairs must have been unhappily situated in Palestine itself; that even the royal city must have been in danger; since the Idumeans penetrated even so far as the valley of Salt, which is scarcely distant one day's journey? If all these things be omitted; if, moreover, in the book of Samuel no sufficiently express mention is made of the Assyrians, with whom David certainly waged war, Ps. lxxxiii. 9, why should we not suppose that many lesser facts are omitted in the history, to which however a poet might allude, as natural and proper matter of amplification? But to return to the point I set out from, those who will not allow themselves to be ignorant of a great part of the Jewish history, will be apt to explain more of the Psalms upon the same principle, and as relating to the same facts, than they ought: whence the poetry will appear tame and languid, abounding in words, but with little variety of description or sentiment.

There are commentators of another class, who take inexcusable liberties of invention, and instead of resorting to the records of the ancients, endeavour to supply facts from their own ingenuity: in which way some of the biographers of David have greatly indulged



themselves, and particularly DELANY. For example, in the seventh chap. of the 3d vol. he takes it for granted, from Ps. xxxviii. and xli. that at the time when Absalom formed the rebellion, David was ill of the small-pox (a disease which we cannot pretend to assert from any historical proof to have been known at that period, and from which the king at his time of life could scarcely have recovered) and to shew that nothing could exceed his rashness in inventing, he adds, that by means of the disease he lost the use of his right eye for some time.

Others have recourse to mystical interpretations, or those historical passages which they do not understand they convert into prophecies: into none of these errors would mankind have fallen, but through the persuasion, that the whole history of the Jews was minutely detailed to them, and that there were no circumstances with which they were unacquainted.

MICHAELIS.

[C. p. 231.] PSALM XXIX. 9.

*The oaks are affected with pain or tremble:* אֵילָן or אֵילָנִים is an oak and certainly this word frequently occurs in the plural masculine, with the insertion of ׀. And in this sense the Syr. has taken it, who renders it ܕܡܘܝܬ ܐܝܠܢܐ. For the word זיך in Syriac as well as Hebrew, denotes motion or agitation of any kind; nor is its meaning confined to the pains of childbirth. See Isa. li. 9. "This explanation of the word יָדוּלֵל in the sense of *moving* or *shaking*, is established beyond a doubt upon the authority of the Arabic verb ܕܠܐ, to *move* or *shake*." H. Though the word אֵילָנִים does not appear in the Syriac Lexicons to signify an oak, yet it occurs four times in this sense in the Syriac version, exactly answering to the Hebrew word אֵילָן, 2 Sam. xviii. 9, 10, 14. as also in this place. The common translations suppose this passage to relate to the *hinds bringing forth young*: which agrees very little with the rest of the imagery either in nature or dignity: nor do I feel myself persuaded even by the reasonings of the learned Bochart on this subject, Hieroz. Part i. lib. iii. chap. 17. Whereas the oak struck with lightning admirably agrees with the context. And Bochart himself explains the word אֵילָן (which has been absurdly understood by the Masorites and other commentators as relating to a stag) as spoken of a tree in a very beautiful explication of an obscure passage in Gen. xlix. 21.

LOWTH.

Lowthianae interpretationi obstat primo, quod nomen אֵילָן, *quer-*

*cus*, sive *terebinthus*, in plurali ubique תִּיבִּימָא dicitur, nusquam תִּיבָא sive תִּיבָא; deinde quod לִיָּהוּ de *pariendo* usurpatur Iesai. li. 2, atque de *parturiendo cervarum* Iob. xxxix. 4. Vnde recte nostra verba Chaldaeus reddidit תִּיבִּימָא תִּיבָא, et Hieronymus, *obstetricans cervis*, Aquila *ὠδινύστος*, et Quinta editio, *μαιομένου ἐλάφους*. Et quum vates antea ipsas vastissimas solitudines Iovae fragore concuti cecinisset, subideret oratio, si arborum, tempestate commotarum, mentionem nunc subiicerit. Egregria contra, et minime vulgari poeta digna sententia, animantium quoque genera, Iovae voce audita, terrore perterrita ita contremere, at parerent ante legitimum tempus, et ipsa ea animalia, quae suo etiam tempore aegre enitantur.

ROSENMUELLER.

Conjectural emendations of the text.

The two notes which I have copied from Lowth on this Lecture, (Notes A and C) afford a tolerably fair example of the Bishop's disposition to *condemn the Masorites* and *alter the text*, wherever he finds a difficulty. Several notes of this kind I have omitted, and these I have retained, rather for the purpose of giving a specimen of Lowth's manner in such cases, than from any opinion of the correctness or usefulness of his conjectural criticisms. The groundlessness of his conjectures in these two instances (A and C) is sufficiently evinced by the remarks of Michaelis and Rosenmueller, which immediately follow his. Conjectural emendations of the scriptural text are always suspicious; the result, for the most part, of ignorance or indolence; and accurate investigation almost uniformly shows them to be wrong, and as absurd as they are presumptuous. If the reader wishes for evidence of this truth that will be perfectly satisfactory, he need only compare the verbal criticisms in Lowth's Commentary on Isaiah with the more recent and accurate philological investigations of Gesenius.

The Latin versions of the passages of Scripture which Lowth has introduced into these Lectures, are deservedly classed with the most elegant and beautiful specimens of translation that have ever been produced. Yet they can never be taken upon trust. They must always be compared with the original. Whenever he follows his original, he is admirably exact as well as elegant; but when he forsakes the text and gives loose to conjecture (as he sometimes does), he ought not to be trusted. For the sake of example, let the student compare his translation of the first verses of the ninety-first

Psalm (Lect. XXVI. p. 217) with the original, and with the Commentaries of Rosenmueller or De Wette. In the original edition of his Lectures he has a note on these verses, defending his own translation, and severely censuring the Masorites for their punctuation of the text: but every critic is now convinced that the Masorites were in the right, and the Bishop wrong. So it happens in almost every case of conjectural emendation.

If Lowth, then, with all his genius and scholarship, was betrayed into such errors, when he attempted to improve the text of the Bible by his own conjectures; what can be expected from others, who, without his talents or learning, imitate him in his daring spirit of conjecture? It should be remembered, however, to the honour of Lowth, that he usually proposes his emendations with all the modesty and diffidence characteristic of true genius; that he wrote before the text of the Bible was settled, and at a time when great results were expected from the collations of Kennicott; that he had the ardent and adventurous spirit of a new discoverer; and that critics, at that period, had not learned so well as they have since, that patient application is a much surer, though a more toilsome way of coming at truth, than bold conjecture, which costs neither time nor labour.

S.

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#### NOTES ON LECTURE XXVIII.

[A. p. 234.] *Song of Deborah.*

Antiquissimum Deborae ἐπὶ νίκῃον ad carminis Pindarici regulas exactum et in Strophas, Antistrophas et Epodas divisum, quae a tribus choris fuerint cantatae, praemissa carminis analysi accuratiore, subiunctoque Commentario, legitur in A. F. RYCKERSFELDERI *Sylloge Commentatt.* Cap. V. p. 53. seqq. Cui iungenda C. F. SCHNVRERI in idem Carmen Commentario, quae in eius *Dissertatt. Philologico-Criticis iunctim editis*, Goth. et Amstelæd. 1790, in octon. exstat p. 36, seqq. ubi et plura aliorum scripta sunt laudata, quibus praestantissima ode illustratur.

ROSENMUELLER.

By far the most complete and satisfactory exegesis of this sublime relic of antiquity has been given by G. H. Hollmann, a student of Gesenius at Halle, in an academical exercise published at Leipzig with the title: *Commentarius Philologico-criticus in Carmen Deborae, Judicium V.*



The spirited and elegant Latin translation of the Ode, by this acute philologist, is inserted here. S.

### ARGUMENTVM.

Quatuor priora commata prooemium carminis constituunt. Vates Deum laudandum esse causâ ob salutem populo tributam, regesque et principes ad opinicium suum audiendum invitât (vers. 2, 3.) Deum postea describit splendida theophania populo suo auxilium ferentem (vers. 4, 5.) His defuncta ad belli initia et causas recarrit et res gestas potiores ad mortem usque Siserae poeticis coloribus exornat, ita tamen, ut subinde Dei populi que fortis laudes immiscet illeque orationem interpellat (vers. 9—12.) Exponit igitur statum reipublicae Iudaicae infelicem, additis etiam publicae calamitatis causis (vers. 7, 8.) recenset et laudat tribus, quae suo et Baraci monitu arma sumserant (vers. 13, 14, 18,) taxat reliquas, quae publicae salutis domesticam praestulerant (vers. 16, 17,) pugnaeque denique eventus omnes ordine enarrat, hostium fortitudinem et fugam, tempestatem iis infensam, Siserae mortem mulieris manu paratam (vers. 19—37.) Mutata deinde scena Siserae matrem inducit de filii cunctatione quiritantem, mox solatio erectam praedaeque sperantem (vers. 28—30); in media tandem oratione abruptum egregia apostrophe omnes Dei hostes Siserae instar parituros esse praesagit.

### VERSIO LATINA.

2. Quod imperarunt imperatores in Israël,  
spontaneum se praebuit populus,  
laudate Iehovam!
3. Audite reges, aurem advertite principes!  
ego Iehovae, ego canam,  
psallam Iehovae, Israël's Deo.
4. Iehova, cum prodires e Seir,  
cum incederes ab agro Idumaeae  
contremuit terra, etiam coeli stillarunt,  
etiam nubes stillarunt aquas.
5. Montes contremuerunt coram Iehova,  
hic Sinai coram Iehova, Israël's Deo.
6. Samgaris diebus, filii Anath,  
diebus Israël's cessabant vias,  
viaque publica incedere soliti  
occultis tramitibus ibant.
7. Deerant duces in Israël, deerant,  
donoc surrexi ego Debora,  
surrexi mater in Israël.
8. Elegit (Israël) Deos novos,  
tum oppugnarunt portas:  
nec clypeus apparuit, nec hasta  
in quadraginta millibus Israël's.
6. Animus meus grates agit ducibus Israël's,  
spontaneis in populo.  
Laudate Iehovam!
10. Qui asinabum vehimini candidis,  
qui stragulis insidetis,  
qui inceditis in via,  
meditamini carmen!

11. Ob iubila (praedam) sortientium inter haustra,  
ibidem celebrent beneficia Iehovae,  
beneficia in duces eius Iaraëliticos ;  
tunc ad portas descendat populus Iehovae.
12. Age, age Debora,  
age, age, cane carmen !  
surge Barac,  
deduc captivos tuos, fili Abinoam !
13. Tunc ego : " descendite residui nobilium populi,  
Iehova descende mihi cum heroibus."  
Ex Ephraimitis, quorum inter Amalekitas sedes,  
post eos Beniamitae cum copiis eorum ;  
e Machiritis descenderunt duces,  
e Sebulonitis tenentes sceptrum praelecti.
15. Et principes Issaschari cum Debora  
et Issaschar, praesidium Baraci,  
in vallem se effuderunt vestigia eius secuti.
16. Ad rivos Rubenitarum  
magna ceperunt animi consilia ;  
quare vero tranquille sedistis inter stabula  
ad audiendas fistulas pastorum ?  
ad rivos Rubenitarum  
magnae fuerunt consultationes.
17. Gilead trans Iordanem tranquille sedebat ;  
et Dan cur navibus vacabat ?  
Ascher sedebat in littore maris,  
ad portus suos conquiescebat.
18. Sebulonis vero populos vilipendit animam mortique obtulit  
nec non Naphtali in agris montanis.
19. Venerunt reges, pugnarunt,  
tum pugnarunt reges Canaan  
apud Taanach, ad aquas Megidduntis ;  
sed frustum argenti non reportarunt.
20. E coelis pugnatum est,  
stellae ex orbitis suis  
pugnarunt cum Sisera.
21. Torrens Kischon abripuit eos,  
torrens proeliorum, torrens Kischon :  
conculcabas, anima mea, robustos.
22. Tunc (terram) feriebat calces equorum  
ob festinationes equitum eorum.
23. " Exsecramini Meros, dixit angelus Iehovae,  
exsecramini incolas eius ;  
quia non venerunt Iehovae auxilio,  
auxilio Iehovae cum bellatoribus."
24. Laudetur prae mulieribus Iaël,  
uxor Heberi Kenitae ;  
prae mulieribus in tentorio laudetur.

25. Cum aquam posceret, lac obtulit,  
in patera pretiosa attulit lac spissum.
26. Manum extendit ad clavum,  
dextram ad malleum operarum,  
et contudit Sisera, conquassavit eius caput,  
concussit et penetravit tempora eius.
27. Ad pedes eius collapsus est, cecidit, iacuit  
ad pedes eius collapsus est, cecidit,  
ubi collapsus est, ibi cecidit peremptus.
28. Per fenestram prospexit et clamavit  
mater Siserae per clathros:  
" quare tardat currus eius venire,  
quare morantur gressus curruum eius?"
29. Sapientiores matronarum eius respondebant ei;  
immo vero ipsa sibi respondit:
30. " en ! invenient, distribuent praedam,  
puellam, immo duas puellas unicuique viro,  
exuvias vestium tinctarum Siserae,  
exuvias vestium tinctarum, versicolorum,  
vestem tinctam, duas versicolores collo praedatoris."
31. Ita peribunt omnes hostes tui, Iehova !  
sed, qui amant illum, erunt  
veluti sol, quum prodit in robore suo.

[B. p. 235.] HABAKKUK III.

Multum lucis praestantissimo huic carmini attulit C. F. SCHNE-  
RER in peculiari super eo Commentatione quae in eius *Dissertatt.*  
*Philologico-Criticis iunctim editt.* legitur, p. 342. seqq.

ROSENMUELLER.

[C. p. 237.] ISAIAH XLV.

An English translation of this triumphal song of the Hebrews,  
by Professor Stuart, may be found in Porter's *Analysis of Rhetori-  
cal Delivery*, (p. 380).

#### NOTES ON LECTURE XXX.

[A. p. 247.] *Dramatic Psalms.*

Our author has treated with his usual modesty a very difficult  
subject: on which those who have been more adventurous, have  
been led into great errors. It is certain that many of the Psalms



are dramatic, which some commentators observing, delighted with their own discoveries, whenever they met with a passage more difficult than usual, or were able to catch any new and visionary explanation, more agreeable to their theological notions, they have eagerly resorted to the change of the persons or characters, though no such change existed. Such are those commentators who have fancied, in accommodation to the quotation of St. Paul, Heb. i. 10, the spirit and purpose of which they did not understand, that the former part of the ciid Ps. to the 24th verse: "Take me not away in the midst of my age," consisted entirely of a speech of Christ, and that the remainder; "as for thy years, they endure throughout all generations" etc., was the reply of God the Father. Whoever indulges himself in this mode of explication, may easily find out any thing he pleases in the Psalms, and with little or no philological knowledge, without the smallest assistance from criticism, can give a meaning even to the most difficult or corrupted texts of Scripture: any meaning indeed but the right one.

Our author very justly suspects, that not a few passages of the dramatic kind are at present unknown: yet we are not allowed to suppose an ode of the dramatic kind, unless it appear so by some decisive proof; nor ought we to fly to this discovery as a refuge for our ignorance. For, as many passages may probably be of a dramatic kind which we do not know to be such, so, many may be accounted dramatic, which a little more philological knowledge, or the true reading, which antiquity may have obscured, would point out to be simple and regular compositions. In order to demonstrate how cautious commentators ought to be in these respects, I shall have recourse to one example, whence we shall be able to judge how uncertain many others are, however they may bear a face of probability.

The second Psalm has been accounted one of the principal of the dramatic kind, and scarcely any person has doubted of its being altogether dramatic. If you attend to some commentators, the holy prophet speaks in the 1st and 2d verses; in the 3d the rebellious princes; in the 4th and 5th the prophet again; in the 6th God; in the 7th and 8th the anointed king; in the 10th, 11th, and 12th the holy prophet. It is very extraordinary that they should not see, that it is not the rebellious princes who speak in the third verse, but that their words are only referred to by the prophet, and that, according to the manner of the Orientals, without directly identify-

ing the speaker. Nothing is more common in the Arabic poetry, than to relate the actions and sentiments of particular persons, and to annex their very words without any preface, of saying or he said, etc. It does not even appear that God is introduced as a dramatic character, for if so, what is the use of the words—"He shall speak unto them in his wrath," etc. ?

MICHAELIS.

In illo psalmos ad dramaticam formam revocandi studio vix quinquam longius progressus est I. C. C. Nachtigalio, Philologo Halberstadensi, qui non solum plurimos singulos psalmos vel in chores distribuit, vel inter varias personas, quas loquentes introduci existimeret, dispersit; verum et ex psalmis pluribus artificiose digestis jussum componere drama conatus est, quo arcae sacrae ad montem Sionem translatio scenice repraesentetur. Cui hypothese exponendae peculiarem dicavit librum, duplici instructum epigrapha, una haec: (*Gesänge Davids und seiner Zeitgenossen nach der Zeitfolge geordnet und neu bearbeitet von I. C. C. NACHTIGAL, Erster Band, Leipz. 1796*), altera vero, argumentum distinctius indicante: (*Zion, ältestes Drama aus der vorhomerischen Urwelt*). Legitur 1 Paral. XV. XVI., Davidem expugnata arce Sionica omnes Israelitas Hierosolymam convocasse, ad Iovae arcam in Sionem montem, locum ei a se praeparatum, deportandam, Levitarumque principibus mandasse, ut cognatos suos, cantores, musicis praeficerent instrumentis, nablis, citharis et tympanis, qui concentum edentes laetitiam agerent. Tum ex aedibus Obededomi arcam a Levitis gestatam, Davide et Israelitis senatoribus copiarumque ducibus, ceterisque Israelitis omnibus comitantibus, cum clangore et buccinae tubarum cymbalorumque sonitu agentibus, et nablis citharisque resonantibus, solenni pompa in Sionem deductam fuisse. Introducta arca divina et in tabernaculo, quod ei David tetenderat, collocata, non solum facta sunt Deo sacrificia, verum et decantati hymni, qui Iovam, Israelitarum Deum, celebrarent atque laudarent. Ex hymnis illis unus, qui 1 Paral. XVI. 8—36 integer insertus legitur, totus est conflatus ex Psalmis cv. et xcvi. De aliis hymnis, qui ante arcam in tabernaculo sacrorepositam decantati essent, ne vestigium quidem. Decantatos tamen plures alios hymnos fuisse antequam ad tabernaculum perventum esset, ita firmiter persuasum est Nachtigalio, ut adeo qui psalmi, et quonam illi ordine cantati fuerint, definire ausus sit. Atque 1) ad radices quidem montis Sionici cantatos autumat Psalmos xcvi. et xcvi; 2) in adscensu montis Ps. lxxviii. Exod. xv. 1—18. Ps. lxxvii. xlvii.; 3) in montis summo Ps. cxxxiii.; 4) ante portas Sionias

Ps. xxiv; 5) in Sionis introitu Ps. c; 6) dum tabernaculi atria ingrederentur, Ps. cvii. cxviii. 1—4. 19—29; 7) dum locarent arcam sacram, Ps. cxxxii. 8, 9, 13—18; 8) post arcam repositam, Ps. xcix. cv. cvi. cxiv. ii. lxxv. lxxvi. xcvi. ix. x. 1 Sam. ii. 1—10. Ps. cxiii. xli. xxix. xciii. lxxxvii. cxxv. cxxxv. cxxxvi. lxvii. cxxviii. 1 Chron. xvii. 36. Sed quam incerta coniectura illi Psalmi locis a Viro Doctissimo ipsis tributis assignentur, nemo non videt. Quid Psalmos xcvi. et xvi. ad montis Sionici radices, aut Psalmum cxxviii. monte ascenso cantatos fuisse arguit? Neque quid huiusmodi argumentis destitutis coniecturis carminum intelligentia iuvetur, facile est intellectu.

ROSENMUELLER.

[B. p. 253.] *Solomon's Song.*

It may seem a bold undertaking to contradict the opinion of all the commentators, which has been so long established, that the principal personages of the Canticles are a bride and bridegroom during the nuptial week. As I cannot, however, reconcile the matter to my mind, I shall briefly assign the reasons of my dissent from this opinion. The first is, that no direct mention is made, during the course of this long poem, of the ceremony of marriage; nor of any one of the circumstances which attend that ceremony. Again, who can possibly imagine a bridegroom so necessitated to labour, as not to be able to appropriate a few days in his nuptial week, to the celebration of his marriage; but be compelled immediately to quit his spouse and his friends for whole days, in order to attend his cattle in the pastures? Nay, at this time of festival, he even does not return at night, but leaves his bride, to whom he appears so much attached, alone and unhappy. Or if such instances might occur in particular cases, certainly they do not afford a proper subject for a nuptial song. At the same time, the bride is supposed to have the care of a vineyard, and her brothers are displeased with her for having neglected it; this is so contrary to every idea of nuptial festivity, that unless we could suppose it meant in the way of burlesque, it is impossible to conceive it to have any relation to the celebration of a marriage.

There is still less reason to think, that the poem relates to the state of the parties betrothed before marriage; and there are not the smallest grounds for supposing it the description of any clandestine amour, since the transaction is described as public and legal, and the consent of parents is very plainly intimated.



It remains therefore to explain my own sentiments, and these are, that the chaste passions of conjugal and domestic life are described in this poem, and that he has no relation to the celebration of nuptials. It may seem improbable to some readers, that conjugal and domestic life should afford a subject for an amorous poem; but those readers have not reflected how materially the manners of the Orientals are different from ours. Domestic life among us is, in general, a calm and settled state, void of difficulties, perplexities, suspicions, and intrigues; and a state like this rarely affords matter for such a poem. But in the East, from the nature of *polygamy*, that state admits more of the perplexities, jealousies, plots, and artifices of love; the scene is more varied, there is more of novelty, and consequently, greater scope for invention and fancy.

There is another circumstance which militates against the conjecture of Bossuet, namely, that though the nuptial banquet continues for seven days, no time appears in this poem appropriated to the banquet itself. Either the bride and bridegroom are separated from, and in quest of each other, or they are enjoying a wished-for solitude; and whenever they converse with the virgins, it is in the street or in the field, and never with the guests, or at a banquet.

MICHAELIS.

Hoc si ita est, mirum, primae noctis nulla cani gaudia, non pompam comitantium: nusquam adclamationes, cantica, bona verba, audiri convivarum, ereptam virginitatem, cuius ad eos, indicium deferri solet, more Orientali gratulantium. Omissum in carmine, quod primas in illo et praecipuas facere partes debuisset.

MICHAELIS.

Argumentum Cantico Canticorum praeberet nuptias Salomonis, cuius sponsa fuerit Pharaonis filia, vetus quidem opinio est, Grotio quoque, aliisque interpretibus haud paucis probata, sed cui plura in ipso carmine obvia adversantur, quae neque Salomoni, regi, neque eius sponsae, filiae Pharaonis, conveniunt. Ita, v. c. Pharaonis, magni regis, filia non erat vineae aut ovium custos, I. 6, 8, nec soror Salomonis, IV. 9. Neque etiam illa per plateas noctu discurret, III. 1, 2, aut a vigilibus urbis percussa, vulnerata et spoliata fuit, V. 7. Praeterea ut Salomonem, aut alium poctam ipsi aequalem, huius carminis auctorem statuamus, nullo modo admittit illius sermo et stylus aperte chaldaizans, adeoque scriptorem Esrae et Nehemiae aequalem arguens. Vid. I. G. Eichhornii *Isagogen in V. T. P.* III § 647, p. 531, seq. ed. sec.

ROSENUELLER.

## NOTES ON LECTURE XXXI.

[A. p. 257.] ISAIAH LXII. 5.

The ambiguity of the word which I translate "conditor tuus," has created inextricable difficulties to all the translators and commentators, both ancient and modern. The LXX. have mistaken it, and the Masorites have mispointed it. Their authority has consecrated the error, and almost established it. Nothing however appears clearer to me, than that this word בניך is not the plural of the noun בן (a son,) but of the participle *benoni* of the verb בנה (to build,) and is parallel and synonymous to *thy God* in the alternate member. Compare the above quoted passage of Isaiah, where also mark that *husbands* and *creators* occur in the plural, with the same relation to the same word. By this explanation, every offensive and indelicate idea is taken away from the passage, which I do not wonder proved an impediment in the way of the commentators. LOWTH.

It is a serious objection against the proposed emendation of Lowth, that the verb יבנלך is plural; but if it agrees with בניך as *pluralis excellentiae*, the usual grammatical construction would require the singular number of the verb. (See Stuart's Heb. Gram. p. 167, 3d edit.) That the Bishop, in this case as in many others, has condemned the Masorites without reason, will appear from the following remarks. S.

Permiscentur Ies. lxii. 5. duae metaphorae, quod in V. T. haud rarum. *Incolae civitatis*, quatenus in civitate sati editique sunt, censentur civitatem habere *matrem*, atque adeo eius esse *fili*; vid. Ies. li. 18. Rursus iidem incolae, quatenus *civitatem habent*, occupant, possident suae potestati obnoxiam eidemque foedere devincti sunt, vocantur בעלי עיר, *habentes urbem*, i. e. cives urbis, ut Ios. xxiv. 11. בעלי יריחו *incolae*, (habentes) *Ierichuntis*; nec non Iudic. ix, 46. בעלי מגדל שקנא *habentes turrim Sichemiticam*, incolae, cives. Ex ipsa hac phrasi sumptum emblema Ies. lxii. 5. usurpatum, et ad eam formatum. Rursus, ut civitates respectu eorum, qui in iis nascuntur, gaudent dici *matres*; sic caedam respectu libertatis, ornatus, formae, veniunt nomine *virginum* בת ילוח. Vid. Iesa. xxxvii. 22. xlvi. 1. Reges et principes, qui id agunt, ut civitatis regimen et praefecturam sibi vindicent, tales virgines censentur *ambire*. Quibus observatis apparet, vatem, ut significaret, ipsos Hierosolymae restaurandae *cives* eius patronos et vindices fore, recte dicere potuisse: *Sicut adolescens maritat sibi virginem, sic ma-*

*ritabunt se tibi filii tui*, quomodo, retento רָיָה, locos Iesa. lxii. 5. vertendus, i. e. habebis reges et principes benignos propriae gentis, non tyrannos (oppositum Ies. xxvi. 13. *Iova, Deus noster*, alii *domini* רָיָהּ *possident nos*). Pertinent haec ad declarationem com-matis superioris 4, ubi civitas Hierosolymitana dicitur nuncupanda esse, מְרִיתָהּ *maritata*.  
ROSENMUELLER.

[B. p. 257.] *Freedom of Oriental imagery.*

That diversity of manners, that delicacy of conversation, which is observed by some nations, and the coarseness of others, results chiefly from the degree of intercourse which subsists between the sexes. In countries where the intercourse is free and familiar, where the sexes meet commonly in mixed companies, they accustom themselves to a greater modesty and delicacy, in their conversation which modesty is easily transferred to their composition. Such a people, therefore, with whom entertainments would seem languid and dull without the company of young women, though perhaps not free from licentiousness of manners, will yet be chaste and delicate in their expressions. Hence arises, in a great degree, that extreme delicacy in the people of modern Europe, which can scarcely bear some of the passages in Virgil, and the chastest of the ancient poets. The case is quite different with the people of the East: for the men having scarcely any society with the unmarried women, or with the wives of others, converse together without being restrained by the blushes of females, or with their own wives, whom they regard in a very inferior light, and consequently treat with all the insolence of familiarity; the women also converse chiefly with each other; and as they are similarly situated, are probably not less licentious. It is not extraordinary, therefore, if greater freedom of speech should prevail in those countries, and if this, when transferred into their poetry, should be found to offend our ears, which are accustomed to so much greater delicacy in conversation.

MICHAELIS.

(Compare Lect. VI. Note A).

[C. p. 258.] *Allegorical interpretation of Solomon's Song.*

On the question, *whether the Song of Solomon be an allegory?* after the very able discussion of it given by Lowth in the text, I will here insert the arguments of Michaelis for the negative, and those of Rosenmueller for the affirmative, and leave the reader to decide for himself.

S.



Our author has treated this very difficult subject with more modesty and more address than any of the commentators; and indeed has said all that could be said, exclusive of the theological arguments, in favour of the allegorical sense. I question, however, whether he will be able to remove all doubt from the mind of a cool and attentive reader; the reasons of my scepticism on this matter, I will, as a person earnestly desirous of the truth, endeavour briefly to explain; and I shall hold myself greatly indebted to that man, who shall, upon rational principles, undertake to remove my scruples.

With regard to the authority of the ancient Christian church, in a question merely depending upon the exposition of a passage in Scripture, I hold it of very little importance, not only because the exposition of Scripture does not depend upon human authority, but because the fathers, as well on account of their ignorance of the Hebrew language, as of the principles of polite literature in general, were very inadequate to the subject, eagerly pursuing certain mystical meanings, even with respect to the clearest passages, in the explanation of which the most enlightened of the modern commentators have refuted them. The time of the fathers was so very distant from the period when this poem was composed, that it is impossible they should have been possessed of any certain tradition concerning its purport and meaning. I should entertain very different sentiments, if I could find any mention of the Song of Songs in the New Testament; but, on the most diligent examination, I have not been able to discern the slightest allusion to that poem.

The authority of the synagogue is of still less importance in my eyes, since in other respects we have found it so little deserving of confidence in its attempts at expounding the Scriptures. Such of the Jewish writers as have treated of the Canticles, lived so many ages after the time of Solomon, after the total destruction of the commonwealth and literature of the Hebrews, that they knew no more of the matter than ourselves.

With regard to the analogy of other poems, all that can be said is, that it was indeed possible enough for Solomon to celebrate the Divine love in terms analogous to those descriptive of the human affections: but it is impossible to determine by that analogy what kind of love he intended to be the subject of this poem. Shall we pretend to say, that his attention was wholly employed upon sacred poetry, and that he never celebrated in verse any of the human affections? Or, because some of the Hebrew poems celebrate the Di-

vine goodness in terms expressive of the human passions, does it follow, that on no occasion those terms are to be taken in their literal sense?

Our author has prudently declined examining the arguments which are usually taken from the poem itself, and from its internal structure, for the purpose of establishing the allegory. It is indeed very improbable, that in so long a poem, if it were really allegorical, no vestiges, no intimation should be found to direct us to apply it to the Divine love; nothing, which does not most clearly relate to the human passion: and that too, considering it as the production of one of the Hebrew writers, who are accustomed to mix the literal sense with the allegorical in almost all their compositions of this kind. In so long an allegory one should also expect a deeper moral than usual, and one not generally obvious, to be indicated: but no sober commentator has ever been able to deduce from the Canticles any other than this trite sentiment, that God loves his church, and is beloved by it. That this simple sentiment should be treated so prolixly, and nothing more distinctly revealed concerning it, who can credit, but upon the soundest basis of argument or proof? But in support of it we have only the bare position, that the Hebrew writers sometimes make use of allegorical expressions to denote the Divine love.

I am aware of the objections which are started by those who rest the matter upon theological arguments, though I cannot find that these are of great weight or utility in the present debate: for they seem rather calculated to silence than convince. They assert, that though the book has never been quoted by Christ or his apostles, it was yet received into the Sacred Canon, and is therefore to be accounted of Divine original: and that there does not appear any thing in it divine, or worthy of sacred inspiration, unless it be supposed to contain the mystery of the Divine love. Lest, however, they should seem to have proved too much, and lest they should dismiss the reader prepossessed with some doubts concerning the divine authority of the book, I will venture to remind these profound reasoners, that the chaste and conjugal affections, so carefully implanted by the Deity in the human heart, and upon which so great a portion of human happiness depends, are not unworthy of a muse fraught even with Divine inspiration. Only let us suppose, contrary to the general opinion concerning the Canticles, that the affection which is described in this poem, is not that of lovers previous to their nuptials, but the attachment of two delicate persons, who have been long united in the

sacred bond; can we suppose such happiness unworthy of being recommended as a pattern to mankind, and of being celebrated as a subject of gratitude to the great Author of happiness? This is indeed a branch of morals which may be treated in a more artificial and philosophical manner; and such a manner will perhaps be more convincing to the understanding, but will never affect the heart with such tender sentiments as the Song of Solomon; in which there exists all the fervour of passion, with the utmost chastity of expression, and with that delicacy and reserve, which is ever necessary to the life and preservation of conjugal love. Let us remember, moreover, that Solomon, in his Proverbs, has not disdained very minutely to describe the felicities and infelicities of the conjugal state.

MICHAELIS.

Carminē Salomoneo humanos amores cani, minime fert V. T. Librorum universa indoles et ratio. *Sacri* enim sunt et habentur isti libri, eoque nomine spectant vel res divinas et cultum divinum, vel necessitudinem, quae Deo cum populo suo intercedit, quo et libri historici sunt referendi, vel institutionem vitae morumque disciplinam. Inter tales gravissimi sanctissimique argumenti libros relatum esse mere amatorium carmen, in quo nulla plane Dei ratio habita, talique carmini *praestantissimi* nomen inditum fuisse, mihi quidem numquam persuadebitur. Sed insunt carmini ipsi haud pauca, quae nos ad sensum allegoricum ducunt. Primo enim duarum personarum, quae in hoc dramate primas agunt, alteram, *amatam*, esse *collective* intelligendam, statim carminis initio innuitur, I. 4, ubi una eademque persona de se ipsa in singulari et plurali promiscue loquens inducitur: *Trahe me post te: curremus. Introducet me rex in sua conclavia. Exsultabimus, de te laetantes. Recolimus amores tuos vino praestantiores.* Additurque: *probi te amant.* Deinde in hoc carmine eiusmodi occurrunt, quae proprie accepta ab Orientalium omnium moribus, imo ab omni veri specie ita abhorrent, ut nulli poetae in mentem venire potuerit, talia tanquam vere gesta canere. Insuditum prorsus, et plane novo more, ut puella a germanis sibi iratis vinearum custos statuatur, quae suam ipsius vineam non custodiisse queritur, I. 6; ut eadem amatam quaerens noctu per vias plateasque vagetur, III. 1—3, illumque in matris domum et cubiculum introducere cupiat, III. 4, VIII. 2; quam vero vagantem custodes urbis nacti verberant vulnerantque, V. 7. Quis unquam puellam cum *fumi columna e deserto ascendente* comparatam legit, ut III. 6? Nec minus *παράδοξον* illud, quod amata IV. 6, ex Amari ver



tice, ex Seniris et Hermonis vertice, ex leonum lustris, et tigrum montibus accitur. Quae enim in proxima nota Michaelis afferet ad defendendum illum locum proprio sensu acceptum nemini facile sufficiant. Istis igitur ex ipso carmine desumptis argumentis, qualia supra Michaelis postulabat, pro repudiando sensu proprio, si addis, quae Lowthus p. 254, *seqq. edit. huius*, ex parabolicae dictionis analogia pro stabiliendo sensu allegorico ita disputavit, ut fundamentum et rationem allegoriae in Cantico Canticorum regnantis explicaret, dilueretque offensiones ex imaginis indignitate exortas, auctoritate sacrorum scriptorum ferme omnium cum Veteris tum Novi Testamenti; nulla, credo, idonea caussa restet, cur dubites, cani poemate illo, quod *Salomonis praestantissimum carmen* inscribitur, *mutuos Iovae et populi a se dilecti eique fidelis amores*, sub amoris, quo vir et femina invicem flagrant, ita continuata allegoria, ut amantium desiderium, ardor, sollicitudo, cumque his coniunctae perturbationes vividissimis coloribus repraesententur. Recte igitur Iarchi observat, induci hoc carmine populum Israeliticum in exilio recordatum pristinum Dei erga se amorem, quo motus ille ipsum prae ceteris populis peculium sibi elegerat, maximisque beneficiis ornaverant. Repudiatum vero, ob multa commissa maleficia, iam erroris poenitentia ductum ita apud se cogitare: *referam me ad maritum meum priorem; nam melius tunc mecum agebatur, quam nunc* (Hos. ii. 7, al. 9). "Personam," inquit, "gens Israelitica gerit mulieris, quae divortio facto iterum mariti sui desiderio tenetur, dilectoque iungere se cupit, in memoriam revocans adolescentiae suae amorem, et defectionem suam confitens. Dilectus vero, illius sollicitudine ipse dolore correptus, *meminit collata in illam iuvenem sponsumque beneficia atque amorem* (Jer. ii. 2), inque memoriam revocat decorem pulchritudinis eius, et recte beneque ab ea facta, per quae ipse eidem forti amore devinctus est. Testatur igitur, se illam non libenti animo afflixisse, nec repudium ei perpetuum dixisse, sed eam suam uxorem adhuc esse, ipsumque eius maritum, qui ad eam sit rediturus." Quae quum nobis verissime dicta videantur, nos tam longe absumus a vituperando Chaldaeo interprete, qui hoc carmen partim exponit de veteribus Dei in populum Israeliticum collatis beneficiis, inde ab Abrahami temporibus, partim de illis, quae futura aliquando sperant Hebraei, cum res eorum a divino illo rege e stirpe Davidica oriundo restituta fuerit; ut in carmine difficili explicando illum magis ducem sequendum arbitremur, quam nostrae aetatis interpretes, qui hocce poema tanquam Anacreonticum aliquod aut Ca-

tullianum carmen tractantes in eo exponendo fere lasciviunt. Quod tamen non ita intelligi velim, quasi Chaldaei interpretatio per omnia sit temere adoptanda. Indagandae sunt atque examinandae rationes, quibus sua loci cuiusque explicatio nitatur, quae non nisi illis probabilibus repertis est sequenda. Quod ut exemplo illustremus, locum I. 6. *Ne adspiciatis me, quod fusca sum, quoniam me sol adspexit: mei germani mihi irati me vinearum custodem statuerent, quae meam ipsius vineam non custodivi*, Chaldaeus hoc modo exponit: *Dicit coetus Israel coram populis: Ne despiciatis me, quod nigrrior sim vobis, quoniam feci secundum opera vestra, et adoravi solem et lunam; nam falsi prophetae effecerunt, ut Iehovae ira in me ingravesceret et docuerunt me simulacris vestris servire, inque vestris statutis ambulare; Domino vero aeterno, qui est Deus meus, non servivi, et in eius statutis non ambulavi, nec observavi praecepta et leges eius.* Ad quam interpretationem recte diiudicandam ante omnia est observandum, *filiabus Hierosolymae*, בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם (vs. 5), quas alloquitur sponsa, id est, gens Israelitica, intelligi gentes alias, Hebraeae aliquando aetate aurea ita sociandas, ut civitas Hierosolymitana omnium futura sit caput et metropolis, iuxta illud Ezechielis xvi. 61. *Te* (ad populum Israeliticum sermo dirigitur) *tuos recordantem mores pudebit cum accipies sorores tuos* (אַחֵי תִּי), *tum te grandiores, tum minores* (i. e. gentes alias), *quas ego tibi filias dabo* (תַּחֲתִי אֶתְּנֶנּוּ לְךָ). Hinc est, quod Chaldaeus suae huius versus interpretationi praemisit: *Dixit coetus Israel coram populis.* Iam expendamus versus 6, singulas dictiones. אַל-תִּרְאֵנִי *Ne adspiciatis me*, scil. cum contemptu, ut Iob. xli. 26, de Leviathane: אַת-כָּל-גִּבְיָהּ יִרְאֶה *Omne elatum, superbum, despicit.* Recte igitur nostra verba Chaldaeus vertit: לֹא תִבְזּוֹן יָתִי, *ne contemnatis me.* Sequitur in Hebraeo: שָׁאֲנִי שְׁחֻרְחָרַת *Quod ego adeo sum nigra* (geminatio namque literarum radicalium intendit significationem) vid. BOCHARTI Hieroz. P. II. L. V. C. VI. T. III. p. 613, edit. Lips. Dixerat iam antea (vs. 5). se esse nigram sicut Kedaritarum s. Arabum tentoria (שְׁחֻרְחָרַת אֲנִי בְּאֶחָדֵי קֶדָר). Nigrore autem conditio misera et afflicta designatur, ut Thren. IV. 8, חֹשֶׁךְ מְשֻׁחָרַר תֹּאֲרָם, *Obscurata prae nigrore forma eorum* (procerum urbis Hierosolymitanae). Et ibid. V. 10. עֵרְנוּ בְּחֵזֶר נִכְמָרוּ *Cutes nostrae instar fornacis atratae sunt propter adustiones famis.* Iob. xxx. 28, קָרַר הַפְּתִי בְּלֹא חֶמֶה *Ater, moerens, incedo non a sole adustus, nec tamen sol me denigravit.* Nostra vero nigroris sui causam reddit hanc: שֶׁשָּׁזְפָתִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, *quod adspexit me fulgidis suis radiis sol*, quo

intelliguntur miseriae et calamitates, quibuscum Hebraeis exsulantibus extra patriam terram conflictandum erat, uti contra de illis liberandis et in statum feliciorum restituendis Iesai. xlix. 10, dicitur: *Non esurient, neque sitient, וְלֹא-יָבֹם שָׁרֵב וְנֶחֱשׁ, nec feriet eos aestus et sol, quoniam qui eorum misertus fuerit, praeerit eis, eosque ad aquae scaturigines ducet.* Nec non Ps. cxxi. 6, וְיָחַד הַקָּמָר לֹא-יִכְבֶּה, *Interdium sol non feriet te, neque noctu luna.* Quum vero malis istis tolerandis meritas Hebraei persolverint poenas Deo, a cuius cultu et observantia abduci se malis suasoribus obsequuti passi essent, poeta Hebraeus, vel potius, quam is loquentum inducit, sponsa, i. e. populus Hebraeus, haec addit: בְּנֵי אִמִּי נִחְרִי-בִי *Filii matris meae*, qui eandem mecum genitricem, etsi non eundem genitorem habent, *fratres mei ira in me accensi sunt.* Intelliguntur impii inter Hebraeos, qui Iovae cultores oderunt, de quibus Iesai. lxvi. אֲמָרוּ אֲחֵיכֶם שְׂמִי שִׁנְאִיכֶם מְנַדִּיכֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמִי *Frates vestri, osores vestri, qui vos propter nomen meum vexant, dictitant (per ludibrium): adficiatur Iova gloria, ut vestrum videamus gaudium! Sed eos pudebit.* . Alloditur simul ad Ps. lxxix. 8, 9. *Tua caussa, Iova! infamiam sustineo, faciem ignominia tectam habens.* מִחֵר הִיָּחִי לְאָחִי וְנִכְרַר לְבְנֵי אִמִּי *Alienus habeor meis fratribus, et extraneus eadem mecum matre natus.* Quod tamen cum vexationibus, tum persuasionibus victi plures Iovae cultores ad deorum peregrinorum cultum, sive polytheismum, abduci sese passi essent, hisce innuitur verbis: שָׂמִי נִסְרִי אֶת-הַכֶּרְמִים בְּרַמִּי שְׁלִי לֹא נִסְרִי *posuerunt, a. fecerunt me talem quae custodiret, coleret, vineas plures et alienas, vineam vero, quae mihi, propriam meam vineam provinciam mihi demandatam, non custodivi, i. e. eo me adegerunt, ut plurium peregrinorum deorum religiones sequeretur, relicto patrio deo, neglectisque eius institutis: Hunc ipsum sensum, qui solus orationis seriei carminisque consilio est congruus, Chaldaeus optime expressit verbis superius adductis. Plura de Cantici Canticorum interpretatione disputavimus in Commentatione vernacule scripta, Ueber des Hohen Liedes Sinn und Auslegung in den Analekten fuer das Stud. der exeget. und systemat. Theologie, a Keilio et Tzschirnero, VV. SS. RR. editis, P. III. p. 138, seqq.*

ROSENMUELLER.

Mystical poetry of the Persians.

What CHARDIN relates of the Persian poetry, may perhaps not be unworthy of the reader's notice in this place. "Debauchery and licentiousness," says he, "are the common topics of these compositions; but I must not omit remarking, that the most serious of their



poets treat of the sublimest mysteries of theology, under the most licentious language, in the way of allegory, as Afez in his *Kasel*." Voyage de CHARDIN, 4to. Tom. ii. cap. xiv. LOWTH.

(Compare Lect. XI. Note D.)

Ceterum de arcano sensu, quem Hafizi (حافظ), aliorumque, qui eum sunt imitati, poematibus inesse perhibent, pluribus disseruit Guil. Iones et in *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariis*, (P. III. Cap. IX., p. 181. edit. Lips.), et in peculiari Commentatione *super Persarum atque Indorum poesi mystica*, quae legitur tam in Societatis Asiaticae, quae Calcuttae floret, Commentariis, *Asiatick Researches* inscriptis, (Vol. III. p. 353 seqq. edit. London. in octon. quam in Jonesii Operibus iunctim editis, Vol. I. p. 445 seqq.) De Hafizi poesi typica egit quoque Otm. Frank in libro, cui epigraphe: *de Persidis lingua et genio Commentationes phaosophicopersicae* (Norimberg. 1809, 8, p. 107. seq.) Mysticae illius theologiae placita, quae in suis carminibus iucundissimis imaginibus involuta et exornata cecinit Hafiz, pluribus exposuit Herbelotus in *Bibliotheca Orientali* sub voc. *Eschk Allah عشق الله* i. e. *amor Dei*, cuius quinque gradus statuunt Mystici

Mohammedanorum : 1) حُبُّهُ seu مَحَبَّةٌ *amiciam s. dilectionem*, 2) عشقٌ *amorem*, 3) شوقٌ *desiderium*, 4) اشتياقٌ *desiderium*

5) وجدٌ *amoris ecstasin*. Vt vero de ratione, qua Hafizi carmina, meras voluptates spirantia, theologice exponere solent Mohammedani, Nostrates ipsi iudicare possint, subiicere visum est speciminis ergo odam, quae in poetae Persici Divano, i. e. odarum syntagmate, primum locum occupat, cum paraphrasi iuxta mentem Commentarii Turcici, quae legitur in TH. HYDE, *Syntagm. Dissertat.* T. II. p. 447.

1 Agedum, o pincerna, circummitte poculum et praebe illud (propinandum)!

Amor enim primo facilis videatur, sed accidunt tandem difficultates.<sup>(1)</sup>

2 Propter vesicae moschi odorem, quem tandem Zephyrus dispergit ex illis antiis (dilectis),

Ex nodo cincinni illius fragrantis, quantus incidit cordibus ardor!<sup>(2)</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Si enim formosae alicui amorem ostenderis," exponit Suidius, poetae huius Commentator, "ea statim variis blandimentis te magis magisque illaqueare conatur, sed postea renitentiam ostentans tibi magnas suscitatur molestias, quos quum amans sufferre non possit, modo vino, modo opio, aliisque portionibus se quodammodo refocillare, animumque confortare aggreditur."

<sup>2</sup> Quum crispiorum amatae crinium nodi, moschi fragrantiam exhalantes, non facile explicantur, in iisque solvendis zephyrus diutius moretur, donec eorum fragrantiam diffundat; maiori semper desiderio afficitur amans.

- 3 Stragulum vino tinge, si caupo tibi dixerit;  
 Nam qui ignare incesserit, non est de via et more mansionum,<sup>(3)</sup>
- 4 Mihi in mansione formosorum (dilectorum) quatenus securitas convictus,  
 quum quovis momento  
 Campana sonum edat<sup>(4)</sup> (hunc): Induite baltheos vestros!<sup>(5)</sup>
- 5 Nocte tenebrosa, inter timorem fluctuum, et gurgitem adeo terribilem,  
 Quomodo cognoscant statum nostrum levitur onusti littoris incolae!<sup>(6)</sup>
- 6 Totum negotium meum ob propriam pertinaciam in infamia desinit.  
 Occultum quomodo manebit secretum illud, quod in consensibus celebratur!<sup>(7)</sup>
- 7 Si praesentiam (amati) desideras, ab eo ne abscondas te, o Hafiz!  
 Vt pervenias ad amatum, valedic mundo, et missum fac eum!

Paraphrasis iuxta mentem Commentarii Turcici.

1. Agedum, o Monitor sacer, monitorum et exhortationum plenam mensuram praebe!

Nam etsi amor divinus primo intuitu facilis videatur, in eo tandem difficultia reperiuntur.

2. Propter vestigia et impressiones gratiae, quas tandem afflatus divinus ex illo velo pulchritudinis et excellentiae divinae pandit,

Propter plicaturas, inquam, ac ordines veli et gradus occultationis divinae, quantus cordibus nostris inest ardor!

3. Devotionis stragulum vino amoris tingito, nec esto religione quasi aridus et siccus, si sacrorum antistes tibi praeceperit:

Ille enim, qui ignoranter et sine notitia amoris ambulaverit, non assequitur normam ac viam mansionum et graduum accessus ad Deum; nam coniunctio cum Deo obtinetur amore divino, iuxta celebrem apud Arabes sententiam: proxima ad Deum via est via amantium ipsum.

4. Mihi autem in mansionibus seu gradibus ambulationis ad Deum quae-

3 Retinuimus Hydianam huius hemistichii versionem, quod ei Commentarii Turcici paraphrasis respondet. Sed rectius verba Persica ita vertuntur: *nam viator non ignorat viam modumque stationum*. Simplex huius versus sensus hic est: si tibi caupo dixerit: tapetem ad sacra et preces sterni solitum (is enim voce سجاد signficatur) vino tinge, dictis eius pare; nam expertus viator omnes vias amoris anfractus et latebras atque recessus perspectos et exploratos habet. Id est: quicquid tibi caupo praeceperit in amore faciendum, sive id fas, sive nefas fuerit, prompte et sine cunctatione exsequere, etenim ille consuetudinum amoris apprimis peritus magister est.

4 Imago petita a peregrinantium turnis, quas *Caravanas* vocant: signo enim protectionis tintinnabulo dato viae comites admonentur, ut sarcinas colligant et iumentis imponant, quo omnes simul loco movere et iter aggredi possint.

5 Vel: *sarcinas colligate*.

6 Dum nos in divortii tenebris versamur, et aemuli metu angimur, atque veremur, ne perpetuae separationis voragine absumamur, tantorum periculorum formidinem quomodo norint illi, qui in tranquillo littore amatae iuncti metu aemuli et divortii timore carent?

7 Inconsultis meis et unico ad meam lubricitatem, non ad amatae nutum ac voluntatem institutis factis, dedecus et infamiam mihi contraxi. Aut qui sperare potui, tectum occultumque fore amorem, de quo in concionibus populi sunt confabulationes?

nam est a seductionibus Satanae securitas? quatenam est permanentia ac tuta vivendi ratio? quam singulis momentis.

Discessus campana pulsetur, quae funestam illam vocem edit: accingite vos baltheis vestris, hincque migrate!

5. Et in tali cogitationum mundanarum animaeque cupiditatum caligine, inque tanta istius, in quo ambulamus, maris fluctuatione et horribili peccatorum gurgite.

Quomodo statum nostrum perspectum habere eiusve misereri possunt angeli, vel ii, qui plenam cum Deo coniunctionem obtinuerunt, adeoque certandi onere levati, incolumes in salutis littore collocantur?

6. Res eo tandem recidit, ut dum propriam voluntatem sector propriae pertinaciae poenas luam; nam Seni et monitori sacro non obsequutus, servituti Satanae subiicior, et infamia mea inter homines celebratur; iuxta illud, quod apud Arabes memoriae proditum est: quicumque Senem (doctorem) sibi assistantem non adhibuerit, eius Senex (doctor, magister) proculdubio erit Satanas.

Atque id quidem, quod in publicis hominum consensibus effutitur, arcanum manere non potest.

7. At si tandem praesentia divina frui cupis, propria culpa (i. e. adhaerendo mundo), ne separe te ab ea, o Hafiz!

Sed reice mundum, quem tantopere dilexisti et missum facito!

Cuius carminis postremus versus satis arguit, quae de amore et vino cecinit poeta, ipsum velle allegorice de divino amore et intentione ardentisque erga Deum pietatis sensu dicta intelligi. Quod quidem poetae popularibus ita est persuasum, ut ipsis **لسان الغيب** *lissan elghaib* i. e. lingua arcana s. mystica audiat. Vide vitam Hafizi ex Daulet Schahi historia poetarum Persicorum in Wilkenii *Chrestomath. Pers.* p. 220, quae Franco-gallice reddita legitur ab S. de Sacy in *Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi*, T. IV. p. 238 seqq. Nostratium quidem nonnulli, ut Reviczkius et Iones, etsi negare nequeant, Hafizum aliosque poetas ei similes immiscere passim suis carminibus eiusmodi versus, qui ardentissimum Dei amorem et pietatis erga eum sensum profitentur; id tamen eo consilio ab illis factum esse existimant, ut criminatum cavillationes subterfugerent, civesque suos credulos et religiosos deciperent, dum ipsi voluptatibus liberius indulserint. Sed reputandum est, omnia eiusmodi carmina composita esse ab hominibus rigidiori Sufiorum\* disciplinae addictis, qui in monasteriis inclusi totos rerum divinarum meditationi et vitae contemplativae sese devoverant. Tales inter Arabes Abul-Ola (de quo vide Herbelotii *Bibliothec. Oriental.*) et Faredh (vide Silvestre de Sacy, *Chrestom. Arab.* P. III. p. 152 seqq.) inter Persas praeter Hafizum, Deschami, Kha-

\* **صوفي** De quibus vide Pocockii *Specim. Hist. Arab.* p. 374. seqq.



cani, Orsi, Mirkhosru, Nizami, et plures alii, qui theologiam mysticam allegoria amoris Leilae et Medschnuni, aut Khosrui et Schirinae, involutam cecinerunt. Nec desunt libri, qui clavis usum praestent, qua dictionem figuratarum, quibus Mystici illi suis in carminibus uti solent, sensus arcanus recludatur. In iis traditur, *somnum* significare perfectionem divinarum meditationem, *fragrantiam* spem obtinendi favorem divinum. *Aura lenis refrigerans* indicat gratiae divinae emanationem, *oscula et amplexus* vero significant pietatis *ἐξαρσῆς*. Per *idololatrias, infideles et libidinosos* intelliguntur homines porrius religioni addicti, quorum *idolum* est ipsum summum numen. *Taberna vinaria* locum sacrum ad orandum indicat, et *caupo* virum pium, qui aliis salutaria monita impertit. *Pulcritudo* summi numinis perfectionem, *cincinni* gloriam eius longe lateque expansam, *labia* arcana essentiae eius, et *genarum pili molles propullulantes* spiritus coelestes thronum illius circumstantes designant. *Voluptate*, denique, *lascivia et ebrietate* indicantur animi concitati et a corporis sensibus abstracti motus ad contemplanda coelestia. ROSENUELLER.

[D. p. 262.] *Illustration of passages quoted from Solomon's Song.*

- IV. 8. "Mecum ex Libano sponsa,  
 "Mecum ex Libano veni;  
 "Prospectabis ex cacumine Amanae  
 "Ex cacumine Seniri et Hermonis,  
 "Ex iustis leonum, montibus pardonum."

MICHAELIS.

Sensum eorum, quae poeta Hebraeus figurate expressit, ita exposuit Chaldaeus: *Dixit Dominus in verbo suo: mecum eris habitans, coetus Israel, qui similis es sponsae verecundae, et mecum ingredieris in domum Sanctuarii; offerentque tibi munera principes populorum, qui habitant super fluvium Amanae, et incolae montis nivis, et gentes Hermonis, et pendent tibi tributa habitatores civitatum fortium, qui robusti sunt sicut leones, munera ab urbibus montium, i. e. ab habitatoribus urbium montanarum, qui sunt fortiores pardis.* Ad quam interpretationem recte intelligendam et diiudicandam observandum, *Libano* templum Hierosolymitanum innui, e liguis cedrinis in Libano nascentibus, exstructum (plura vid. in not. ad Ezech. xvii. 3), haud sine allusione ad nomen *לְבָנוֹן*, *thus*, ob thuris in templo frequentissimum usum, unde idem vs. 6. eiusdem Capituli quarti Cantici allegorico nomine *הַלְבָנוֹן הַזֶּה*, *collis thuris* appellatur. *Libano* templum indicari a nostro poeta, apparet quoque ex III. 9, *אֶפְרַיִם עָשָׂה לִי הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֵמָה מַעֲצֵי הַלְבָנוֹן*, *Thalamum*

8. *solum fecit sibi Salomo rex e lignis Libani, quae Chaldaeus explicat: תיבול קדושא Templum Sanctuarii aedificavit sibi rex Salomo de lignis cedrinis.* Hinc idem interpretis infra IV. 15, pro eo quod in Hebraeo est: נוֹזְלִים מִן-לְבָנוֹן, *quae defluunt de Libano*, posuit: *בְּבֵית מִקְדָּשָׁא דְּמִתְבְּנִי בְּרוּשָׁיִם, aquae quae libantur super altare, דְּמִתְקַבְּרִי, in domo sanctuarii, quae aedificata est Hierosolymis, et vocatur Libanus.* Quae quum ita sint, verba IV. 8, תִּיבֹל מִלְּבָנוֹן תְּבִיֹא *Mecum e Libano, o sponsa! mecum e Libano venies*, hoc sibi volunt: mecum e Libano, i. e. templo, et urbe atque terra, in qua illud situm est, migrabis, in exteras terras deportandus, sed itidem mecum, Iova, eo reverteris. Iarchi: “Quando deportabimini de Libano isto (i. e. templo, ut annotarat ad vs. 6), mecum deportabimini, nam ego migrabo vobiscum. Quando vero revertemini ab exilio; ego vobiscum revertar, quin etiam omni exilii tempore in angustiis tuis mihi fuerunt angustiae (Iesai. lxiii. 9). Dicitur vero hic: mecum *de Libano* venies, i. e. quando deportabimini de Libano isto, mecum venietis, nec dicitur: mecum *ad Libanum* venies, ut innueret, se ab illo inde tempore, quo sint egressuri, usque ad tempus, quo sint reversuri, semper iis affuturum.” *Sponsae* nomen populo Israelitico tribuitur ex Iesai. lxii. 5, וְיִשׁוּשׁ חֶתָן, *Quam de sponsa voluptatem capit sponsus, eam de te capit Deus tuus.* Iam satis, spero, tibi patebit ratio explicationis Chaldaicae hemistichii prioris. Quod vero alterum attinet hemistichium, תִּשְׁוִי מְרֹאשׁ אֲמָנָה וְגו', id ex mente Chaldaei interpretis ita capiendum erit: *prospectabis advenientes ex Amanis vertice* etc., i. e. eos qui e gentibus exteris ad te cum muneribus mittuntur, quibus gratiam et amicitiam tuam sibi concilient, secundum illud Iesaiæ lx. 5 seqq. *Convertetur ad te marina turba, tibi gentium copiae venient. Te camelorum armentum obruet, dromades Madianitici et Ephani, omnes ex Sabaca venient, aurum et thus adferentes.* Noster poeta vero, quia proxime antea Libani mentionem fecerat, exterarum nationum legatos in terram Israeliticam descendentes eleganter fingit de illis montibus, qui et Libano iuncti essent, et fines boreales Cananaeae constituerent, vide Deut. iii. 8, 9, iv. 48. Pro monte *Amana* Chaldaeus posuit *flumen* eiusdem nominis, et monte illo decurrens, atque Damascenos agros alluens, 2 Reg. v. 12; pro שְׁנִיר vero *montem nivis*. Videlicet *Senir* erat illud nomen, quo *Hermonem* Amoraei appellare solebant, uti diserte dicitur Deut. iii. 9. Hermonis verticem vere nive fuisse tectum, non solum ex Hieronymi Onomastico apparet, ubi sub *Aermon* legitur: *de quo*



*nunc aestivae nives Tyrum ob delicias feruntur*, verum etiam ex Samaritano interprete, qui Deuter. iv. 48 habet : טוֹר תִּלְגַּא דְּרוֹא, חֶרְמוֹן, *mons nivis, qui est Hermon*. Atque ita eodem loco Targum Hierosolymitanum habet טוֹר תִּלְגַּא, *mons nivis*, quum in Hebraeo תִּרְמוֹן legatur.

II. 10—13. Haud absimilis veris descriptio apud OVIDIUM, *Fastor.* L. I. vs. 151 seqq.

Omnia tunc florent, tunc est nova temporis aetas,  
Et nova de gravido palmitum gemma tumet.  
Et modo formatis amicitur vitibus arbor;  
Prodit et in summum seminis herba solum;  
Et tepidum volucres concentibus aëra mulcent;  
Ludit et in pratis luxuriatque pecus.  
Tum blandi soles, ignotaque prodit hirundo;  
Et luteum celsa sub trabe fingit opus:  
Tum patitur cultus ager, et renovatur aratro.  
Haec anni novitas iure vocanda fuit.

Ceterum illum Cantici locum Chaldaeus refert ad Hebraeorum ex Aegypto exitum in mense Abib (Exod. xiii. 4, 5), id est, vero tempore. Ita enim ille versum 10 exponit: *Coetus Israel, dilecta mea antiquitus, pulchra operibus, vade, egredere e servitute Aegypti*. Idem sequitur Iarchi, qui tamen bene observavit ad vs. 12 et 13, capiendos eos esse sensu simplici et literali, quo innuit, reliquam suavissimam veris descriptionem ornatus caussa additam, nec singula esse allegorice dicta intelligenda.

IV. 10, 11. Huius loci sensus proprius, iuxta Chaldaeam, hic erit: Gravior es mihi omnibus aliis populis, et longe iucundior, quam quivis suavissimi vini gustus, et qui e te virtutum tuarum odor emanat, superat aromata omnia. Favum destillant labia piorum, propter doctrinam divinae legis et odor vestimentorum sacerdotum est sicut odor Libani.

ROSENMUELLER.

V. 1—5. V. 1. "Capilli tui," etc. The point of comparison is the bright hue and delicate smoothness of the hair. "When we saw the flocks of goats descending from the mountain" (Gilead), (says Schultz in den Leitungen des Hochsten, Th. V. S. 289), [the sun shining strongly upon them] "it seemed as if a cloud of fire covered the mountain, and the splendour was so dazzling that our eyes could scarcely endure it." שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, according to Gesenius, like the Arabic جَلَسَ, means *to sit, to lie down, to be encamped*.

V. 2. "Dentes tui," etc. The point of comparison is the regu-



larity, whiteness, and soundness of the teeth. Among the Arabs, the teeth are often compared to pearls, corals, and the stars; and one of the Persian poets calls a fine set of teeth *the cluster of the Pleiades*.

V. 3. "Labella tua," etc. The beautiful redness of the lips is here referred to. The Arabs, to express the same quality, call the lips *the ruby-mines*; and the Persians speak of them as *the red parrots, conserve of roses, the rosebud, the laughing rose, the peach, the blood of grapes*, etc. The mouth is called *the jewel of Solomon, the secret of concealment, the casket of rubies, the fountain of sweetness, the thief of the heart*, etc.

"Genae tuae," etc. The cheeks, full, tinged with red and white, and partly concealed by the flowing locks of hair, are compared to the two halves of a pomegranate. The same comparison is frequently used by the Arabs and Persians.

V. 4. "Collum tuum," etc. A very bold image, but to an Oriental extremely beautiful. The grace, the nice proportion, and the firmness of the neck, are indicated by the first part of the verse; and the ornaments of it by the second. The Hebrew poet, even here, is outdone by one of the Arabs, who designates the neck of a beautiful woman as *femur coelorum*.

V. 5. "Duæ mamillæ," etc. The image here I believe all will acknowledge to be exquisitely beautiful, and too obvious to need illustration. (Compare *Lied der Liebe, das ælteste und schoenste aus dem Morgenlande. Neu uebersetzt und aesthetisch erklæert durch Dr. Friedr. Wilh. Carl Umbreit, Goettingen, 1820, S. 144 ff.*) S.

Chap. v. 11, 14. VII. 6, 14.

It is much to be lamented, that no commentator has arisen sufficiently qualified to explain this beautiful poem. Those who have attempted it have been scholastic divines, rather indeed mystics, and have entirely overlooked the obvious and more elegant meaning. Indeed the task is by no means easy: besides a very accurate and idiomatical knowledge of the Oriental languages, an intimate acquaintance with the manners of antiquity, and no small information concerning natural history, will be requisite: to these must be added a good deal of reading in the Arabic poetry, particularly in their compositions of the amorous kind, and last of all, a true taste for poetry. Very few of these qualities have existed separately, and never all of them conjunctly, in those who have undertaken to illustrate this poem.

In order to exemplify how much might be effected towards clearing up the obscurities of this most elegant composition, by a knowledge of natural history alone, I will endeavour to explain my opinion of some difficult passages (chap. v. 11, 14. vii. 6, 14.) In ch. v. 6, 11, most people are ignorant, and at a loss to conjecture, what may be the meaning of שִׁבְיָהּ: the Seventy and the Vulgate render it *elatas* (elatas) or the downy substance in which the dates are involved; nor is this translation very different from the Arabic, which renders it the *branch of the palm tree from which the dates depend*. But what relation can this bear to the human hair? I answer, the resemblance is obvious to any person who has seen the object of the comparison, or has remarked the plate of it annexed to the notes on *Theophrastus's History of Plants*, by Jo. Budeus.—But how is Solomon consistent, in the same verse speaking of raven locks, and a golden head?

“His head is of pure gold,

“The locks of which resemble the branches of the palm tree,

“And black as the raven.”

To reconcile this difficulty, it is necessary to know, that although the Orientals may possibly admire *raven locks* in their natural state, yet they are accustomed to dye them with *henna* (so they call the oil of privet) in order to give them a yellow or golden cast: this is an ancient custom, though the existence of it among the Hebrews may be disputed; but probably for this same purpose they might make use of gold dust, as the Latins are known to have done.

With the same *henna* they stain the countenance, as well as the hands and arms, which first changes them to an azure blue, and

\* Simile imagine utitur Amralkeis in Moallaca, vs. 34.

وَفَرَعٌ يَزِينُ الْكُمُنَ أَسْوَدَ فَاحِمٍ  
أَثِيثُ كَقَنْيِ النَّخْلَةِ الْمَتَعَتِكِلِ

Et coma ampla talis, qua decorat dorsum, nigra, carbonis instar,  
Copiosa, implexaque, sicut racemi palmarum impliciti.

Nec non Motanabbi in Speciminibus a Reiskio editis (*Proben der arabischen Dichtkunst aus dem Motanabbi*), Leips. 1765, in quat. p. 23.

حَالِكٌ كَالْفَدَافِ جَثْلٌ بَخُوجِي أَثِيثُ  
جَعْدٌ بَلَا يَجْعِيدُ

(Coma) Nigra ut corvus, densa, noctis colorem referens, copiosa, crispata,  
neutiquam vero arte. ROSENKRÜTZER.

they grow yellow by degrees; and this they esteem a great object of beauty, though it would be accounted deformity with us. This observation will enable us to understand better some phrases in the 14th and 15th verses of the same chapter :

- " His hands are as gold rings
- " Inlaid with chrysolite :
- " His belly as plates of ivory,
- " Inclosed in sapphire :
- " His legs are as columns of marble
- " Upon a base of gold."

The fingers being stained with *henna*, appeared as if they had gold rings on, set with chrysolite; which gem was formerly of a yellow colour. I say formerly, because the same stone which we call the *topaz* was the ancient chrysolite. (See HILL'S *Hist. of Fossils*.) But if by the word שֵׁשׁ we understand the ancient hyacinth or amethyst, an azure colour will then be alluded to, which the same henna produces on the skin. The whiteness of the body, covered with a delicate purple vest, is finely compared to ivory overlaid with sapphire. שֵׁשׁ is without doubt figured marble: to which the legs and thighs are compared, from the blue and serpentine veins which run along them, and which are more pellucid in proportion to the fineness of the skin. The bases are golden slippers.

The 5th verse of the seventh chapter is among the most difficult. The head of the king's daughter is compared to the pyramidal top of Carmel, covered with thick trees, by which simile is, I apprehend, intimated the quantity and beauty of her hair. The word תֵּלַח also occurs for hair, in the explanation of which commentators have been greatly perplexed; some, led away by a whimsical etymology, have supposed it to mean *thin hair*, as if this could possibly be a subject of flattery to a young lady. In my opinion, the word is derived from the Arabic, as well as the Chaldaic word ܬܠܚܐ (the fringe of a garment or tent), and means any thing pendant, or hanging loose. The hair is compared to purple, not however, I think, on account of the colour: for the henna, with which they stained their hair, makes it yellow, not purple: I suspect some allusion is rather intended to the animal, which produces purple. That animal is of a pyramidal form, rising beautifully in a spiral cone, whence it is called אַרְגָּמָן, from its likeness to the stone monuments.\*

\* Sed אַרְגָּמָן *cochleam purpurariam* notare, mera est coniectura, eaque parum certa; illius nomen Hebraicum videtur potius תֵּלַח fuisse; vide BOCHARII *Hieroz.* P. II. L. V. C. IX. Crinis amicae Cantic. VII. 6, *purpureae* comparatur ob splendorem. Ita poetae exteri Niso tribuunt *purpuream comam*, vide e. c. TIBULLUS, L. I. Eleg. IV. vs. 14, et cf. Hygini Fab. 198. ROSENMUELLER.



There follows **וְכַתְּבָהּ כְּמֶלֶךְ מְצֻרָה**, which, with some degree of hesitation, I venture to translate, "as a king encircled with a diadem." the Septuagint has it *ὡς βασιλεὺς περιδεσμενὴ εὐλημῶσι*. The upright Oriental tiara is alluded to, the mark of royalty, which is more noble the higher it is. Thus the verse may be explained, and it will then be found to present a just picture of the Oriental head-dress :

"Thine head resembles Carmel ;

"And thine hair is raised like the shell of the purple,

"Like a king encircled with diadems."

In the latter verses of the same chapter there is an elegant description of spring, but what chiefly creates difficulty is, the **רִיחַן**, which are said to *produce odours*. The famous **CELSIUS**, in his *Sacred Botany*, seems to have been peculiarly unfortunate on this subject. The word is translated *mandragora* (or mandrake) on the most ancient authority : but Celsius cannot allow this plant any place in a love poem, because it has in reality a bad smell. The text explained from the Arabic is, "The mandrakes produce a *strong* odour." We must remember, that it was the opinion of all the Orientals, that the mandrake was of especial efficacy in love potions ; the truth of which opinion is of no concern to us, if we only allow it to have been the general opinion of the eastern nations. The text therefore implies, "The mandrake will breathe its strong and somniferous odours, and provoke to love." MICHAELIS.

#### NOTES ON LECTURE XXXII.

[A. p. 264.] *Scene and characters of the book of Job.*

The information which the learned have endeavoured to collect from the writings and geography of the Greeks concerning the country and residence of Job and his friends, appears to me very inconclusive, that I am inclined to take a quite different method for the solution of this question, by applying solely to the Sacred Writings : the hints with which they have furnished me towards the illustration of this subject, I shall explain as briefly as possible.

The land of *Uz*, or *Gnutz*, is evidently *Idumea*, as appears from **LAM. iv. 21**. *Uz* was the grandson of Seir, the Horite : **GEN.**

xxxvi. 20, 21, 28. 1 CHRON. i. 38, 42. Seir inhabited the mountainous tract which was called by his name antecedent to the time of Abraham, but his posterity being expelled, it was occupied by the Idumeans: GEN. xiv. 6. DEUT. ii. 12. Two other men are mentioned of the name *Uz*; one the grandson of Shem, the other the son of Nachor, the brother of Abraham; but whether any district was called after their name is not clear. Idumæa is a part of Arabia Petræa, situated on the southern extremity of the tribe of Judah: Numb. xxxiv. 3. Josh. xv. 1, 21: the land of Uz therefore appears to have been between Egypt and Philistia. See Jer. xxv. 20, where the order of the places seems to have been accurately observed in reviewing the different nations from Egypt to Babylon; and the same people seem again to be described in exactly the same situations, Jer. XLVI—L.

*Children of the East* or *Eastern people*, seems to have been the general appellation for that mingled race of people (as they are called, Jer. xxv. 20) who inhabited between Egypt and the Euphrates, bordering upon Judea from the South to the East; the Idumæans, the Amalekites, the Midianites, the Moabites, the Ammonites: see Jud. vi. 3. and Isa. xi. 14. Of these the Idumæans and Amalekites certainly possessed the southern parts; see Numb. xxxiv. 3. xiii. 29. 1 Sam. xxvii. 8, 10. This appears to be the true state of the case: the whole region between Egypt and Euphrates was called the East, at first in respect to Egypt (where the learned Jos. Mede thinks the Israelites acquired this mode of speaking, MEDE'S *Works*, page 580), and afterwards absolutely and without any relation to situation or circumstances. Abraham is said to have sent the sons of his concubines, Hagar and Keturah, "Eastward, to the country which is commonly called the East." Gen. xxv. 6, where the name of the region seems to have been derived from the same situation. Solomon is reported "to have excelled in wisdom all the Eastern people, and all Egypt:" 1 Kings iv. 30, that is, all the neighbouring people on that quarter: for there were people beyond the boundaries of Egypt, and bordering on the south of Judea, who were famous for wisdom, namely, the Idumæans, (see Jer. xlix. 7. Ob. 8) to whom we may well believe this passage might have some relation. Thus JEHOVAH addresses the Babylonians: "Arise, ascend unto Kedar, and lay waste the children of the East," Jer. xlix. 28, notwithstanding these were really situated to the west of Babylon.

Although Job, therefore, be accounted one of the Orientals, it by no means follows, that his residence must be in Arabia Deserta.

*Eliphaz the Temanite*: Eliphaz was the son of Esau, and Teman the son of Eliphaz: Gen. xxxvi. 10, 11. The Eliphaz of Job was, without a doubt, of this race. Teman is certainly a city of Idumæa: Jer. xlix. 7, 20. Ezek. xxv. 13. Amos i. 11, 12. Ob. 8, 9. *Bildad the Shuhite*: Shuah was one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah, whose posterity were numbered among the people of the East, and his situation was probably contiguous to that of his brother Midian, and of his nephews, Shebah and Dedan: see Gen. xxv. 2 and 3. Dedan is a city of Idumæa: Jer. xlix. 8, and seems to have been situated on the eastern side, as Teman was on the west, Ezek. xxv. 13. From Sheba originated the Sabæans in the passage from Arabia Felix to the Red Sea: Sheba is united to Midian, Isa. lx. 6; it is in the same region however with Midian, and not far from mount Horeb, Exod. ii. 15, iii. 1.

*Zophar the Naamathite*: among the cities, which by lot fell to the tribe of Judah, in the neighbourhood of Idumæa, Naama is enumerated, Josh. xv. 21, 41. Nor does this name elsewhere occur: this probably was the country of Zophar.

*Elihu the Buzite*: Buz occurs but once as the name of a place or country, Jer. xxv. 23, where it is mentioned along with Dedan and Thema: Dedan, as was just now demonstrated, is a city of Idumæa; Thema belonged to the children of Ishmael, who are said to have inhabited from Havilah even to Shur, which is in the district of Egypt, Gen. xxv. 15, 18. Saul, however, is said to have smitten the Amalekites from Havilah even to Shur, which is in the district of Egypt, 1 Sam. xv. 7. Havilah cannot, therefore, be very far from the boundaries of the Amalekites; but the Amalekites never exceeded the boundaries of Arabia Petræa. (See RELAND, Palæstin. lib. i. c. xiv.) Thema, therefore, lay somewhere between Havilah and the desert of Shur, to the southward of Judea. Thema is also mentioned in connexion with Sheba, Job vi. 19.

Upon a fair review of these facts I think we may venture to conclude, still with that modesty which such a question demands, that Job was an inhabitant of Arabia Petræa, as well as his friends, or at least of that neighbourhood. To this solution one objection may be raised: it may be asked, how the Chaldeans, who lived on the borders of the Euphrates, could make depredations on the camels of Job, who lived in Idumæa at so great a distance? This too is



thought a sufficient cause for assigning Job a situation in Arabia Deserta, and not far from the Euphrates. But what should prevent the Chaldeans, as well as the Sabæans, a people addicted to rapine, and roving about at immense distances for the sake of plunder, from wandering through these defenceless regions, which were divided into tribes and families rather than into nations, and pervading from Euphrates even to Egypt? Further, I would ask on the other hand, whether it be probable that all the friends of Job, who lived in Idumæa and its neighbourhood, should instantly be informed of all that could happen to Job in the desert of Arabia and on the confines of Chaldea, and immediately repair thither? Or whether it be reasonable to think, that, some of them being inhabitants of Arabia Deserta, it should be concerted among them to meet at the residence of Job; since it is evident, that Eliphaz lived at Theman, in the extreme parts of Idumæa? With respect to the *Aisitas* of Ptolemy (for so it is written, and not *Ausitas*) it has no agreement, not so much as in a single letter, with the Hebrew *Gnutz*. The LXX. indeed call that country by the name *Ausitida*, but they describe it as situated in Idumæa; and they account Job himself an Idumæan, and a descendant of Esau. See the Appendix of the LXX. to the book of Job, and HYDE, Not. in *Peritzol*. chap. xi. LOWTH.

On this much disputed subject, compare Jahn, Introduction to the Old Testament, (pp. 458—482 of Turner's translation); Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Alte Test.* (Band V. S. 114 ff.); Herder, *Geist der ebr. Poesie*, Th. I. S. 112 ff.; and Rosenmueller in Jobum (p. 23 seqq.); also Noyes's Job, Introduc. S.

[B. p. 266.] *Antiquity of the poem.*

In opposition to the antiquity of the poem, and to what I have urged above, that it appears to have no connexion with, or relation to, the affairs of the Israelites, appeals have been made to JOB xxxi. 28. See *A free and candid Examination of the Bishop of London's Sermon*, Anonymous, p. 165; in which the author inquires, "In what nation upon earth idolatry was ever accounted a crime but under the Jewish economy?" His argument is proposed as unanswerable, and is thought to be sufficiently confirmed by the authority of Mr. LOCKE. I will, however, appeal to a higher authority than that of LOCKE, namely, that of reason and the sacred writings, and will answer the question in a few words: Under the patriarchal economy, in every tribe and family under Abraham, Melchizedek,

Job, and the rest. On the increase of idolatry Abraham was called by the divine command from Chaldea, to the end, that from him should proceed a nation separate from all others, who should worship the true God, should afford a perfect example of pure religion, and bear testimony against the worship of vain gods. Was it not, therefore, the duty of Abraham, who in his own tribe or family possessed all the attributes of sovereignty, to punish idolatry as well as homicide, adultery, or other heinous crimes? Was it not the duty of Melchizedek, of Job, of all those patriarchal princes, who regarded the worship of the true God, sedulously to prevent every defection from it: to restrain those who were disposed to forsake it, and to punish the obstinate and the rebellious? In fact, in this allusion to the exertion of the judicial authority against idolatry, and against the particular species which is mentioned here, namely, the worship of the sun and moon (the earliest species of idolatry) consists the most complete proof of the antiquity of the poem, and the decisive mark of the patriarchal age. But if it should be suspected, that the ingenuity of the poet might lead him to imitate with accuracy the manners of the age which he describes, this indeed would be more to the purpose, and a more plausible argument against the antiquity of the poem: but I cannot possibly attribute such address and refinement to a poet in a barbarous age, and after the Babylonish captivity. Further than this, the style of the poem savours altogether of the antique: insomuch, that whoever could suppose it written after the Babylonish captivity, would fall little short of the error of Hardoin, who ascribed the golden verses of Virgil, Horace, etc. to the iron age of monkish pedantry and ignorance.

With regard to the other difficulty, the solution of which appears so embarrassing, namely, how any person not acquainted with the Jewish economy could assert, that "God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children," Job xxi. 19? Let the *candid observer* for the present content himself with this verse of Horace.

"Delicta majorum immeritus lues,

"Romane."——

LOWTH.

Contra p̄i num esse Iobi librum Chaldaicis formis, vocibus, loquendi formis, adeoque valde recentem aetatem sapere, demonstravit GEO. IENR. BERNSTEIN in Commentatione vernacule scripta de aetate, argumento et consilio libri Iobi, (in *den Analekten fuer das Studium der exegetischen und systematischen Theologie*, P. III. p. 39 seqq.) Ceterum quam Clericus et Warburtonus primi proposuerat

sententiam (vide Iobum Latine versum et anotatione perpetua a nobis illustratum, Prolegomm. P. XXXIV.) sub Iobi persona adumbrari populum Hebraeum, in Babylonico exilio multa acerba perpesum, eiusque consolandi causa poema compositum esse, tam ingeniose adornavit Bernstein tantoque argumentorum pondere commendavit, ut neminem, qui illius scriptionem legerit, futurum esse existimemus, cui suam sententiam non persuadeat. ROSENMUELLER.

On this subject there are some questions to which, so far as I know, no critic has yet given a satisfactory answer.

If the poem of Job be so ancient as some have contended; how happens it that it had no influence on the subsequent Hebrew literature? and that there is no allusion to it until the time of Ezekiel? (Ezek. 14: 14). If it were the production of a Gentile, and not of a native Hebrew; how could the Jews be induced to receive the work of a foreigner into their canon? Or, how could a foreigner obtain such a perfect mastery of the Hebrew language? for I am quite sure that no one who knows any thing of the business of translating, will contend that the book of Job is a translation. On the other hand, if the book be of more recent date; how happens it that it does not contain the remotest allusion to any part of the Israelitish history? Or, how is it possible that a work of such sublimity of thought, such conciseness and energy of expression, such purity of language, should be produced in the same age and nation as the books of Ezekiel, Daniel, Ezra, etc.? For as to the Chaldaisms of which Rosenmueller speaks, they would depend more on the *region*, than on the *age*, in which the writer lived. S.

[C. p. 272.] *Structure and contents of the poem.*

With the views of Lowth on this subject it may be well to compare those of Michaelis, as expressed in the very judicious translation and abridgement of the Professor's Note, by Mr. Gregory. The reader should be reminded, however, that the investigations of the more recent critics (referred to in Note A) are much more favourable to the hypothesis of Lowth than to that of Michaelis. Many of the opinions of the latter, indeed, (such as the supposed allusions to the *Isles of the Blessed*), are altogether the product of his own fancy, without the least foundation in fact. S.

It has long been a dispute among the learned, whether the poem of Job consists of fable or a true history: this question, if authority



alone be applied to, must long since have been decided in favour of those who assert it to be a real history.

With me I confess, on the other hand, it is no longer matter of opinion, but I feel very little doubt that the subject of the poem is altogether fabulous, and designed to teach us that "the rewards of virtue being in another state, it is very possible for the good to suffer afflictions in this life : but that when it so happens, it is permitted by Providence for the wisest reasons, though they may not be obvious to human eyes." But before I proceed to examine the grounds of this opinion, it may be necessary to premise a few remarks in reply to those who may think the divine authority of the book affected by the supposition of its not being founded in fact. For my own part, I cannot conceive that the sanctity, the dignity, or the utility of that book will be in the least affected, though we should suppose no such person as Job had ever existed.

If moral precepts, conveyed in the garb of fabulous narrations, allure the hearers by the pleasure they afford, if they strike the mind more forcibly, are more easily understood, and better retained than abstract sentiments, I see no reason why this mode of writing should be deemed unworthy of inspiration. Indeed, on the contrary, we find it made use of by Christ himself, nor does it at all derogate from his force as a moral teacher, that the good Samaritan, the rich man and Lazarus, etc. were not real persons.

I shall not however rest here ; for I assert further, that the book of Job is more instructive as a fable, than it could possibly be as a true history. Taken as a mere relation of a matter of fact, it is necessary to suppose that the sentiments and conversations are exhibited exactly as they were spoken, and are the sentiments of mere mortals not actuated by the Spirit of God ; for we find that God has reproved both Job and his friends as being severally mistaken. It would then be impossible to determine what was true or what false ; no doctrine of religion, no precept of morality, could with certainty be deduced from these conversations. In the whole book, the historical part (and how short is that !) and the words attributed to God himself, would be alone divine, or of divine authority, the rest would be all human. Considered as a fable, the case is different. The author, composing under the influence of divine inspiration, we may reasonably suppose has attributed to the fictitious characters such sentiments as were proper and natural to their state and circumstances : we have then, in the first place, a picture of the human mind

drawn by the finger of God; and in the next, we may rest satisfied that Job and his friends err only in the principal matter upon which they dispute, and only on the points for which God has reproved them; but that whatever is said exclusive of this is founded on divine truth; such is the mention of the angels by Eliphaz, and the assertion of Job, that there is none pure among mortals. Finally, we are by these means enabled both to determine what are the sentiments which immediately meet with the approbation of God, and what are the errors which are intended to be exposed. An able writer in dialogue never fails to discover his own sentiments: as from the books of Cicero on *the Nature of the Gods*, we may collect with ease what the author thought, or rather doubted upon the subject, which would have been impossible, if he had only reported the actual words of the philosophers who are supposed to have conversed on that subject.

I will now proceed freely to explain what at first I undertook to prove concerning the book in question. It is surely more becoming to consider the exordium, in which Satan appears as the accuser of Job, rather in the light of a fable than of a true narrative. It is surely incredible, that such a conversation ever took place between the Almighty and Satan, who is supposed to return with *news* from the terrestrial regions. Indeed, the commentators who have undertaken to vindicate this part of the book, have done it with so much asperity, that they seem conscious of the difficulty under which it labours.

Nor will it suffice to answer, as some temperate and rational commentator, like our author, probably will, and indeed as he himself hints: that the great outline of the fact only is true; and that the exordium is set off with some poetical ornaments, among which is to be accounted the conversation between God and Satan. For on this very conversation the whole plot is founded, and the whole story and catastrophe depends. One of the best of men is thrown into so many unexpected and undeserved evils, that neither he nor his adversaries are able to conceive how it can be consistent with a benevolent being, to plunge a good man into so great afflictions: nor has God condescended to explain the motives of it to them, but reproves them all for investigating matters beyond their reach. But the author of the book undoes the knot which is left unresolved in these conversations, and gives the reader to understand how indifferently those reason concerning the Divine Providence, and the



happiness or misery of mankind, who are only partially informed of causes and events. The Almighty acts for the honour of Job, of human nature, and of piety itself; he permits Job to be unhappy for a time, and refutes the accusations of Satan even by the very means which he himself pointed out. Suppose, therefore, that what is thus related of Satan be fictitious, and all the rest true, instead of the difficulty being done away, the consequence will be, that the whole plot remains without any solution whatever. What our author has added concerning one of the historical books of Scripture, in which a similar passage occurs, 1 Kings xxii. 19—22, appears not at all to the purpose. It is not a history related by the author, nor does the author speak in his own person, but a prophet explains a vision which he has had. But those who suppose the book of Job to be founded upon fact, allow that the historian speaks in the first and second chapters, who, if he did invent, would certainly, one would think, take that liberty only in matters which did not affect the great scope of the history, and not in a matter which, if it be supposed fictitious, reduces the whole book to nothing.

Moreover, the style of the whole book being poetical, and so sublime, that I defy any man to imitate it in any extempore effusion, is an irrefragable proof in favour of my opinion. Our author indeed pleads a very specious excuse: he thinks that the conversation and speeches of the different characters have been poetically ornamented. And this argument I do not wish to confute. There are however others who defend the historical truth of the poem in a manner not quite so modest. Among the rest, the famous SCHULTENS alleges it not to be incredible, that these are the actual words of the disputants, if we consider the amazing faculty which the Arabians possess of making extempore verses. In answer to this, I must confess, that all he can urge on this subject will never persuade me, that the poetry, which is confessedly superior to all that human genius has been able to produce, is nothing more than an extempore effusion. Indeed nothing can be more ridiculous, than to suppose men in circumstances of so great distress, in the midst of difficulties and afflictions, capable of amusing themselves with making extempore verses.

These objections which I have just stated, are well known to the commentators: but there are others not quite so common, which induce me to suppose the subject of this poem not historical, but fabulous. So many round numbers and multiplications of them occur in



the life of Job, as to be quite incompatible with mere chance. *Ten* children perish, *seven* sons (which though it be not a round number, is yet held sacred and mysterious by the Orientals) and three daughters: 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 1000 oxen, and exactly half the number of asses. In lieu of these there are restored to him, 14,000 sheep, 6000 camels, 2000 oxen, and 1000 asses, exactly the duplicate of the former numbers; together with exactly the same number of children as he had lost, seven sons and three daughters, and these from one wife. The same principle is found to extend to the years of Job's prosperity, which is a multiplication of the number 70. These circumstances betray art and fiction in the narrator, who has introduced these round numbers, which we know are the first to present themselves to the mind: it bears no appearance of chance or casualty, which, when it predominates in a series of events, produces a wonderful variety, but very little of regularity or equality. The name of Job too, which in the Arabic means returning to God, and loving him, and hating whatever is contrary to him, is so adapted to the character of his latter years, that we can never suppose it a name given to him by his parents, but invented by the author of the story.

A fourth argument is, that the scene is laid in Arabia, yet the poem abounds so much in imagery borrowed from Egypt, that it is plain that country must have been extremely well known to the author, and indeed predominant in his mind, as I have endeavoured to prove in a Dissertation recited before the R. S. of Gottingen.

But the most powerful of all proofs is, that some things appear in the book of Job which could not possibly have place in a true history. At a period when the longevity of the patriarchs was reduced within the limit of two hundred years, Job is said to have lived 140 years after his malady, and therefore could not be very ancient when he fell into this malady; nevertheless he upbraids his friends with their *youth* (who by the way could not be very young, since Elihu in xxxii. 6, 7, 9, reverences their hoary age) and adds, that "he would have disdained to set their *fathers* with the dogs of his flock," xxx. 1. But what is more extraordinary, these same men boast of their own age, and seem to exact a degree of reverence from Job as their junior: thus Eliphaz, chap. xx. 10, "With us are both the grey-headed and the very aged men much older than thy father." These passages, therefore, so directly contradict each other, that they cannot be connected with true history. The opprobrium which he casts upon the birth of his friends seems also an inconsistency,

xxx. 1—6, as it is incredible that so noble and rich a man should ever have chosen his friends from the meanest of the people.

It remains only to remove one objection, with which those who contend for the historical truth of the book of Job, may press us. Job is quoted by Ezekiel along with Noah and Daniel, whom we know to have been real persons, and they are proposed by James as an example of patience, Ezek. xiv. 14, 20. JAMES v. 11; as if it were improper or indecent to recommend the virtues of fictitious characters to our imitation, or as if this were not in fact the end of delineating such characters. Neither is there the least impropriety in instancing the same virtues in real and fictitious characters. Suppose a father to recommend to his daughters the examples of Lucretia and Pamela, as models of chastity and virtue; who would esteem such a discourse reprehensible, or think that it either took from the truth of the history, or gave a reality to the fiction?

To return to the point from which we set out: this poem seems to treat of the afflictions which may sometimes happen to good men, at the same time that the author seems to wish to accommodate the consolation to the people of God, and to represent their oppression under the character of Job. To this opinion it is objected by our author, that there appears nothing in the book like an allusion to the manners, rites, or affairs of the Israelites. As to the manners, they are what I call *Abrahamic*, or such as were at that period common to all the seed of Abraham at that time, Israelites, Ishmaelites, and Idumæans. But perhaps it may be thought necessary to instance those customs which were peculiar to the Israelites, and by which they were distinguished from the Arabians: this, however, would not display much judgement in the author of a poem, the scene of which lies in Arabia; besides that most of the peculiar customs of the Israelites, those I mean which distinguished them from the other descendants of Abraham, were either derived from the Egyptians, or were taught them by Moses: and who would require, that such things as the paschal lamb, and the Mosaic feasts and priesthood, should be introduced into such a poem? The frequent allusions however to the country and the productions of Egypt abundantly answer this objection. Insomuch, that though the scene is laid in Arabia, one would imagine the actors had been Egyptians. Nor are there wanting allusions to the circumstances of the Israelites. These like Job lost their children and possessions by the tyranny of Pharaoh: and, if I am not mistaken, the disease is the same which affected

Job, with that which prevailed among the Egyptians by the command of Moses.

From these circumstances I am much inclined to the opinion which attributes this book to Moses. For is it to be imagined, that a native of Idumæa should crowd his poem with images and figures borrowed from Egypt? Or what native of Arabia (for it must be allowed that the book of Job has some allusions peculiar to Arabia) was so likely to intermingle the imagery of both countries as Moses? To these may be added the allusions to the *isles of the blessed*, which are common to the book of Job and the Mosaic writings. I am well aware that there is more of the tragic, more of strong poetic feeling in this book, than in the other relics of Mosaic poetry, which has induced our author to remark the discrepancy of style. But how different are the language and sentiments of a man raging in the heights of despair, from those which are to be sung in the temple of God! We must also remember, that the poetic style of an author in the flower of his youth is very different from that of his latter days. If Moses were really the author of this poem, he composed it about the age of forty years; but the rest of his poems were written between the 85th and 120th year of his age; at which period I am often surprised to meet with so much vigour of language and sentiment: and no other difference of style have I been able to discover.

MICHAELIS.

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#### NOTE ON LECTURE XXXIII.

[A. p. 281.] *The book of Job not a perfect drama.*

Considering the strong sense and accurate judgement of Dr. Lowth, especially taking into view his very just remarks on the Hebrew writers, Lect. XXIV. p. 205; it is not a little surprising to see him gravely discussing the question, *whether the Song of Solomon and the book of Job be perfect dramas?* What possible concern have the old Hebrew writers, (who had all the simplicity of children in their modes of thought and feeling), with the refined and artificial rules of composition, which were not invented till ages after their death? What have Job or Solomon to do with Aristotle and the Greeks? They were totally diverse in every circumstance of their climate, character, habits, and intellectual developments; they sought different objects, they followed different models; and there is scarcely a single point of resemblance in their respective composi-



tions. The inquiry, then, whether the artificial names appropriated to Greek compositions can be applied to those of the Hebrews, is as vain and useless as the inquiry whether the technical terms of modern European tactics can be properly employed to designate the evolutions of the ancient Oriental armies. The difference between the modes of warfare in this case, is no greater than that between the modes of thinking and writing in the other. Yet so strong and lasting are the prejudices of early education, when uncorrected by a subsequent and more extensive course of study, that such a man as Dr. Lowth thought it necessary to go into a learned and laborious investigation of the propriety of applying Greek names to Hebrew books; and he seems to apprehend that the latter would lose somewhat of their perfection, if they were not conformed to Greek models.

S.

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NOTES ON LECTURE XXXIV.

[A. p. 267.] JOB XVIII. 4.

The LXX. interpret the verse thus : *τί γάρ; ἐὰν σὺ ἀποθῇς, αἰὶνῆτος ἔσται ἡ γῆ ὑπὸ οὐρανόν;* "What! if thou diest, shall the whole earth be desolate? Which version, or rather paraphrase, is most elegant, and in my opinion finely accommodated to the purpose of the sacred writer. When the Orientals would reprove the pride or arrogance of any person, it is common for them to desire him to call to mind how little and contemptible he and every mortal is, in these or similar apothegms;

"What though Mohammed were dead?

"His *Imams* (or ministers) conducted the affairs of the nation.

"The universe shall not fall for his sake.

"The world does not subsist for one man alone.

Nay, this very phrase is still in use among the Arabic writers. GOL. Col. 1570.

HUNT.

[B. p. 288.] *Conduct of Job's friends.*

Our author is too severe in his animadversions on the conduct of Job's three friends, and his translator has made him appear more harsh than he really is. The three sages were touched with the tenderest sympathy at the sight of Job's affliction; and were, undoubtedly, sincerely desirous of affording him consolation. (See Job 2: 11—13). But with their views of the justice and goodness of

God, they could not suppose that their friend had been thus severely afflicted without some fault of his own; and when they heard him complaining so bitterly of his troubles, it struck them like murmuring against providence. Eliphaz, therefore, ventures mildly to reprove him, and intimates, though in the gentlest manner possible, that God had not afflicted him without cause. The suffering patriarch, conscious of his own rectitude, and indignant at the supposed insinuations of his friend, breaks out still more warmly in protestations of his innocence and in bitter complaints of his unmerited woes; till at length, jealousy for the honour of God, the pride of opinion, and the warmth of discussion, gradually provoke the three friends to utter the most severe and unfounded reproaches against their unfortunate companion, who indignantly repels their accusations with increasing zeal, till he silences, and obtains a complete victory over them, by his superior richness of thought and copiousness of language.

In this state of the controversy, Elihu steps in: a young man of great fluency, florid eloquence, and a high opinion of his own capacity. He professes to adopt a middle course between Job and the former speakers; he repeats their most important ideas with a little variation; he adopts their imagery, which he amplifies and extends, without improving it; he adds figure to figure, and sentence to sentence, almost without end or object. He pauses occasionally, apparently with the hope that Job would answer him; but the old sage does not deign the young man a word in reply. *Hiob schweigt*: (says Eichhorn), *welcher Riese wird sich auch mit einem Knaben messen?* The whole discourse of Elihu is evidently preparatory to the introduction of the Deity in the thirty-eighth chapter, and is admirably adapted to exhibit the sublimity of this scene in the most favourable light. S.

[C. p. 291.] JOB XXXVII. 4.

Various interpretations have been given to the last clause of this verse, which Lowth renders; *Neque investigari poterit, cum audita fuerit, vox eius*. In Hebrew, *וְלֹא יֵדְעוּם בֶּן־אָדָם קוֹלִי*. Elihu is here describing the majesty of God as exhibited in tempests; and the meaning of this sentence probably is: *he holdeth them not back*, that is, the rain, hail, etc. (compare v. 6), *when his voice is heard*, that is, in the thunder. So De Wette and Gesenius explain the verse. S.

## LIST OF BOOKS

### MOST FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO IN THE PRECEDING NOTES.

[For the sake of brevity, the titles of those books to which constant reference is made, are not fully written in the Notes. They are inserted here for the purpose of securing the student against mistake in regard to the references, and of directing him to the most valuable sources of information on the general subject of Hebrew Poetry.]

ROBERT LOWTH, de Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum Praelectiones Academicæ; cum Notis et Epimetris JOA. DAV. MICHAELIS, suis Animadversionibus adjectis edidit ERN. FRID. CAR. ROSENMUELLER. I. Vol. 8vo. Lipsiæ, 1815.

SIR WILLIAM JONES, Poeseos Asiaticæ Commentariorum Libri Sex, cum Appendice. I. Vol. 8vo. Londini, 1774.

JOHANN GOTTFRIED VON HERDER, vom Geist der ebraeischen Poesie. Eine Anleitung fuer die Liebhaber derselben und der aeltesten Geschichte des menschlichen Geistes. II. Th. 8vo. Leipzig, 1825.

———, Briefe das Studium der Theologie betreffend. IV. Th. 12mo. Weimar, 1785.

JOHANN GOTTFRIED EICHHORN, Einleitung in das Alte Testament. V. Baende, 8vo. Goettingen, 1823—4.

———, Commentarius in Apocalypsin Joannis. II. Vol. 12mo. Gottingæ, 1791.

WILHELM MARTIN LEBERRECHT DE WETTE, Commentar ueber die Psalmen. I. Th. 8vo. Heidelberg, 1823.

GOTTLÖB WILHELM MEYER, Versuch einer Hermeneutik des Alten Testaments. II. Th. 8vo. Luebeck, 1800.

JOHANN JOACHIM BELLERMANN, Versuch ueber die Metrik der Hebraeer. Eine Beilage zu den hebraeischen Sprachlehren und zu den Einleitungen in die Schriften des alten Testaments. I. Th. 8vo. Berlin, 1813.

WILHELM GESENIUS, Geschichte der hebraeischen Sprache und Schrift. I. Th. 8vo. Leipzig, 1815.

———, Ausfuehrliches grammatisch-kritisches Lehrgebäude der hebraeischen Sprache. I. Th. 8vo. Leipzig, 1817.

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———, Hebraeisches und Chaldaeisches Handwoerterbuch ueber das Alte Testament. I. Th. Leipzig, 1823.

ERNST FRIEDRICH KARL ROSENMUELLER, Scholia in Vetus Testamentum; (scilicet in Jobum, Psalmos, et Libros propheticos). The last editions.

Die Schriften des Alten Testaments, neu uebersetzt von J. C. W. AUGUSTI, und W. M. L. DE WETTE. IV. Th. 8vo. Heidelberg, 1809—10.

[The titles of other works, to which there is less frequent occasion for reference, are inserted in the Notes.]



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